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The Week

EXCEEDING the expectations of all but the most sanguine union leaders, some 400,000 textile workers—representing nearly 70 percent of those normally employed—responded to the strike call last week. This amazing unity of the workers took the textile manufacturers unmistakably by surprise. They had expected that at most not more than 10 or 15 percent would go out, and on this assumption they had arrogantly refused to enter any negotiations to prevent or settle the strike. The Cotton Textile Institute, as well as other associations of manufacturers in the wool and silk industries, have steadfastly refused to deal with the union representatives on the basis that the United Textile Workers did not represent a majority of the workers. With more than half the workers now on strike, what will the manufacturers do? The broad outline of their tactics is already apparent. They are attempting to discredit the initial success of the strike by describing it as an "open challenge to law and order" and as the result of illegal intimidation. "It is a sad state of affairs," said the head of the

National Association of Woollen Manufacturers, "when a *minority group* [italics ours] can intimidate people who want to work." Accordingly, the manufacturers have taken the law into their own hands, determined to give "protection" to the "majority" of workers against the intimidation of the "minority." Thousands of special deputies have been sworn in and in many strike centers the National Guard has been called out to prevent picketing.

THE consequences of this policy are already in evidence: ten pickets were killed last week and several score were wounded. The most vicious assault occurred at Honea Path, South Carolina, where deputy sheriffs and "loyal" workers, as the press dispatches put it, shot and killed seven pickets and wounded fifteen others. This massacre was described in nearly every newspaper as the result of an invasion by a "flying squadron" of pickets—allegedly attempting to intimidate the workers in Honea Path. It was rather surprising, accordingly, to discover in the news stories of the day following that all but one of those killed lived in Honea Path. There can be little doubt that determined efforts to break up picketing—whether of the flying squadron variety or not—will continue. In Anderson, South Carolina, 2,400 special deputies, most of them said to be American Legion men, have been organized by the manufacturers. These men, according to a report in The Daily News Record, a trade paper of the textile industry, "stand ready to prevent the intimidation from any outside mob, such as has taken place in other Southern communities," while in near-by Spartanburg on Monday of this week National Guardsmen forced five hundred strikers to disband. Despite these efforts of armed forces, however, the ranks of the strikers appear to be holding firm. A few mills have reopened—with the benefit of protection—but additional mills have closed. Meanwhile, this week some 75,000 workers in the hosiery, carpet and related textile fields are expected to join the 400,000 already on strike.

RARELY has the attitude of the press been so openly biased and reactionary as in the present strike. The chief conservative American newspapers have apparently learned the supposed lesson

of San Francisco extremely well—that a strike may be a threat to government. The textile strike, of course, is nothing of the sort. The workers are merely asking for recognition of their union and better working conditions. But this has not prevented *The New York Times* and *The Herald Tribune*, for example, from running a series of editorials denouncing the strike as lawless and subversive, and the leaders of the strike as “breakers of the law.” The *Times* described the efforts of the workers to obtain consideration of their grievances as a plot to enforce a special “strikers’ law.” “How pleasant it would be,” said *The Times*, “for mere burglars and murderers if they could possess such a ‘right’ or prerogative.” In a forceful reply to this absurdity, President Gorman of the United Textile Workers remarked in a letter to *The Times*:

We do not want our people to be officers of the law. But neither do we want them to be submitted to the danger of deputized forces that are merely armed mobs, without training and without any particular responsibility. One mill had its strike breakers deputized.

You charge that we want to take the law into our own hands. But if strike breakers are deputized, does that not mean that the mills are taking the law into their hands? You know perfectly well that it means nothing else.

What we want and what we never get is true law enforcement. We get enforcement of the will of mill owners. Nine of our men are in their graves today because the mill owners control law enforcement. Most of these men were shot in the back and there is enough sophistication in the editorial rooms of *The New York Times* to understand what that means.

THE disaster to the “Morro Castle,” one of the greatest marine tragedies of modern times, is as hard to explain as it is to forgive. What went wrong with the fire-fighting system on this great five-million-dollar ship, built only four years ago with a large subvention from the United States government? Why were only two-thirds of the lifeboats lowered? Why did these lifeboats contain on the average less than a quarter of the number of persons they could have carried? Why was the percentage of fatalities so much larger among the passengers than among the crew? Why did the acting captain stubbornly refuse to permit an S.O.S. for thirty to forty-five minutes and thus prevent the prompt rescue that might have avoided many of the fatalities? We hope that the official investigation, which is only beginning as we go to press, will reveal the answers to these questions. In the past, it has been charged that the owners of merchant vessels instruct their officers not to ask help until the latest possible moment, in order to avoid the payment of large sums in salvage. It has also been said that fire and boat drills have been omitted on some ships because they “make the passengers nervous” and cause the danger that on future voyages they may shift to other, more com-

plaisant lines. It has been charged, also, that in their eagerness for profits, steamship owners pay their crews wretched wages, give them bad food and quarters and work them intolerably long hours. Often, it is said, the crew of a steamer is assembled at the last moment before sailing and dismissed (except for a skeleton organization) at the end of the voyage. Under such circumstances it is idle to expect sailors to observe in time of crisis the iron discipline that goes with the old tradition of the sea. We do not know how many of these charges are applicable to the case of the “Morro Castle.” We do know, however, that as long as they prevail generally, similar sea tragedies are possible at any time.

OFFICIALS of the Bureau of Steamship Inspection, now trying to unravel the “Morro Castle” mystery, might accomplish an even more lasting public service by a general investigation into working conditions of all classes of seamen in the American merchant marine. The navigation laws make specific provisions for working hours, wage rates and methods of payment. In disregard of these laws, seamen are sometimes denied their legal right to one-half their earned pay at any port where cargo is handled. Assignments of pay to sailors’ families ashore in many cases are not paid at the specified time. To complaints of the men against frequent violations, employers reply, “Plenty of men on the waterfront want your jobs if you don’t like them.” Bureau of Navigation officials, either incredibly naïve about transgressions going on under their noses or strangely reluctant to use their authority, have likewise a stock answer to all protests: “Give us a signed statement, with names, dates and details; we can’t act without that.” Meanwhile the seamen, knowing that a formal complaint will bring instant dismissal and blacklisting, must “stand and take it.”

ONE merchant marine officer who has dared speak out is Mr. M. M. Grimes. As second mate of the Grace liner “Santa Elena” on a voyage from San Francisco to New York in August, Grimes was ordered, along with other officers, to go on duty supervising loading and unloading of cargo in various ports directly after completing a regular sea watch. Section 4,463 of the navigation laws limits an officer’s work hours to nine in port and twelve at sea. No officer may stand sea watch unless he has had six hours’ rest during the preceding twelve. Grimes, through the attorney for his union, the United Licensed Officers, set a precedent by filing just such a complaint as federal officials ask for—the first protest by a licensed officer in the records of the New York Custom House. Backed by details abstracted from the ship’s log and sworn before a notary public who checked the abstract with the log itself, the statement charges fourteen distinct violations of Section 4,463 during the voyage. For example, according to the complaint, the third offi-

cer had only twenty-one hours' rest in six and one-half days. Twenty-nine years old, Grimes has an unblemished seven-year record as an officer. His action was a sacrifice for his fellow workers, since he has no hope now of signing on another ship. The case is pending before the Deputy Collector of Customs and provides an excellent opportunity for inquiry into marine labor conditions. The wisdom of fabulous government subsidies to the merchant marine is now being seriously questioned. It seems logical also to ask how much of these benefits reaches the army of workers of which ship owners boast, and how safe passengers' lives and valuable cargoes can be under present circumstances.

IN MANY ways the most interesting political news of the week is the report that Mrs. Gifford Pinchot, wife of the present Governor of Pennsylvania, may become an independent candidate to succeed her husband. Governor Pinchot was defeated in the recent primaries in the race for United States Senator, and will be out of public life, temporarily at least, at the expiration of his present term. The case of the Pinchots is as far as possible from paralleling that of the Fergusons of Texas. Mrs. Pinchot comes of a family that has been active in political life for generations and is a woman of unusual intelligence and ability. She is keenly interested in economic questions and particularly in the fight of labor for an American standard of living. On several occasions in the past few months she has joined strikers' picket lines, and the publicity that her action created has helped to bring some of the strikes to a successful conclusion. If the governorship went by merit there would be no question of her election against the two political mediocrities who are the gubernatorial candidates of the Republican and Democratic parties. In Pennsylvania, however, which can lay fair claim to be as corrupt, machine-ridden a state as any in the union, it is usually impossible for an honest independent candidate even to get his ballots counted. If Mrs. Pinchot finally decides to make the race, the contest will be between efficient corruption in the old parties and a growing realization among Pennsylvanians, large numbers of whom are in genuinely desperate condition, that the Republican and Democratic machines are as bankrupt intellectually as they are morally.

SINCE the assassination of Dollfuss, Mussolini seems to have realized that his foreign policy was based on untenable premises. National Socialism, he has learned, can be turned from its chosen course by neither promises nor agreements. Hitlerism has neither financial, economic nor political reserves; its acts are dictated in every case by momentary needs; it seeks always the most plausible immediate methods of forestalling an inner collapse. Mussolini's realization of this fact led him to mass his armies beyond the Alps, thereby preventing the march of the Austrian Legion—but permanently impairing

relations between Italy and Germany. Mussolini's foreign policy, which for the last ten years or more had been posited on Italy's enmity to France, lost that basis when more urgent considerations crowded the Franco-Italian issue into the background. The dream of Italian supremacy on the Continent, which Mussolini had hoped to achieve with Germany's help against France and the Little Entente, failed through Italy's poverty of raw material. The Danubian federation, toward which it had looked to fill this need, became impossible when fear of German aggression drove the Balkan states away from Italy into the arms of France. All this the Duce at last realized, though almost too late for an about-face in international affairs. The Austrian *Putsch*, inspired and organized by the Nazi Bureau of Foreign Propaganda in Munich, convinced the Italian Premier that National Socialism would stop at nothing, not even at his own territorial borders, in its determination to send everywhere its Pan-German ideals. In the German-speaking districts and even in some wholly Italian ones in the Apennine Peninsula, he had discovered the existence of National Socialist propaganda centers that would sooner or later have undermined his absolutist position.

MUSSOLINI'S tentative overtures to France, reported for the first time about two weeks ago, are taking on definite shape and Franco-Italian negotiations for an offensive and defensive alliance are all but complete. To gain this end Mussolini has so far departed from his policies of the past as to renounce his insistence on revision of the peace treaties, a demand that, less than a year ago, won over Bulgaria, Hungary and Austria for coöperation with Germany and Italy. But Paris insists that every understanding between Italy and France must be acceptable likewise to her allies of the Little Entente. Without regrets, since its usefulness is past, Mussolini therefore discards this outworn garment, cut, as it was, to the pattern of German rather than Italian needs. In Vienna he will have to share his influence with France. Budapest will accept his desertion of the demand for treaty revision as the price to be paid for a Franco-Italian guarantee against the restoration of the Dual Monarchy. Jugoslavia, after a long period of indecision between an open alliance with Germany and a continuance of relations with France, is about to break with Germany, loath to share the latter's isolation on the Continent. Finally, Mussolini realizes that he will be able to maintain his influence in Albania, which was seriously threatened in the recent revolt, only with the consent and assistance of France. In Geneva several days ago Louis Barthou, the French Minister of Foreign Affairs, warned that the Franco-Italian understanding is not yet complete. But it will come because it must, because without it there can be no united defense against the German aggressor—that need which at this juncture overshadows all other issues in continental politics.

JUST in the nick of time last week the shoe industry saved the sanctity of its profits from what, in the minds of shoe manufacturers, must be the worst possible kind of violation. The Federal Emergency Relief Administration, it appears, having on hand several million hides from slaughtered drought-stricken cattle, was on the point of converting these hides into shoes for the unemployed. Idle shoe machinery was to be taken over, idle workers were to be employed, and the shoes, produced on a non-profit basis, were to be distributed to the destitute. In this way, thought the F.E.R.A., a given amount of relief money would go further and enable the government to provide more shoes for those who can't afford to buy them. But to the shoe manufacturers this program constituted an invasion of their rights—an invasion, according to the Endicott-Johnson Company, that would "create confusion, loss of confidence, and be serious for leather and shoe industries." The protests, apparently, were effective. Last week Administrator Hopkins announced a sudden change in plans; such manufacturing as is done with the leather will be in established commercial plants—and on a profit basis. In the shoe industry, of course, profits take precedence over relief. But why this notion should sway the relief administration we are unable to see. Moreover, if this latest decision of the F.E.R.A. is to be taken as a precedent, it is especially unfortunate. For the government has several other similar plans for the manufacture of food and clothing by the unemployed for their own use.

The Munitions Revelations

THE Senate committee investigating the munitions industry has made a magnificent start. For the first time, the people of this and other countries have a chance to see the armaments business as it really is. They can see it as a business that lives by deliberately fostering ill will and threats of war between nations and by shamelessly bribing high-placed officials of all countries.

Since the World War, the United States government has many times boasted of its labors for disarmament. We now find that the State, War and Navy Departments have all along privately been acting as sales agencies for American armament concerns. We find that our ambassadors, generals and admirals have been on terms of improper—in one instance, obviously culpable—intimacy with the munitions manufacturers and have done them innumerable favors. From the Senate investigation, we also learn something about the arms makers of other countries, and find the same scandalous situation, varying in detail in Great Britain, France, Poland, Argentina, Brazil and Peru. It seems possible the revelations of the last few days concerning the operations of Vickers will shortly compel a parliamentary investigation in England.

The Senate hearings are as yet hardly begun, but testimony already taken shows:

That in 1928, the State Department interceded with the Spanish government on behalf of the Electric Boat Company of Groton, Connecticut, a concern making submarines. Ambassador Alexander P. Moore was instructed to make strong representations at Madrid, apparently with great success.

That the Navy Department endeavored to help the Electric Boat Company with Turkey. A secret conference was held in the Turkish Embassy at Washington, the six participants in which were subsequently referred to by code numerals. Nos. 1 through 3 turn out to have been the Turkish Ambassador and his two aides, No. 4 Admiral A. T. Lang, No. 5 Admiral Hilary P. Jones, (our leading expert on naval disarmament, ironically enough) and No. 6 a vice-president of the Electric Boat Company. The order, however, finally went to Italian interests.

That in 1928, the War Department offered the Driggs Ordnance and Engineering Company of New York City, makers of anti-aircraft guns, the use of American army gun designs in soliciting business from Poland. In the same letter, Assistant Secretary Robbins called the Driggs company's attention to an article by a United States army officer in "Army Ordnance" which "should serve as very good sales literature in convincing foreign governments of the efficiency of United States anti-aircraft material."

That our government, as a further aid to the Driggs Company, invited a Polish military mission to visit this country. After long delays, the invitation was accepted by Poland, and the Driggs concern was at the point of closing a contract involving many millions of dollars when America's departure from the gold standard in April, 1933, caused the Polish government to reconsider. According to Driggs officials, early in these anti-aircraft negotiations King George summoned the Polish Ambassador before him, and demanded that the business be given to Vickers. London sources indignantly deny this story.

That in 1928, when the Tacna-Arica dispute had brought about strained relations between Chile and Peru, our Navy Department sent Admiral Woodward to Peru, ostensibly to head a training mission, actually to prescribe which United States munitions makers the Peruvian government should patronize. However, when Admiral Woodward recommended that Peru buy destroyers instead of submarines, the Electric Boat Company hurriedly pulled wires in both Washington and Lima, and had one submarine added to Peru's purchases. About this time, the steamship passage to Europe of Mrs. Alfred G. Howe, wife of a United States naval officer serving with Admiral Woodward, apparently was paid by the Electric Boat Company.

That the late E. V. Morgan, for many years United States Ambassador at Rio de Janeiro, worked actively but unsuccessfully to obtain sub-

marine orders for the Electric Boat Company from the Brazilian government.

That in 1932, when war threatened between Colombia and Peru over Leticia, the Navy Department detailed Commander James P. Strong to aid Colombia in preparing its defense, and that, in fact, Commander Strong's "defense" plan was drafted in the office of the Driggs Ordnance and Engineering Company and consisted of a scheme to protect Colombia's five seaports by groupments of Driggs anti-aircraft guns. During this period Commander Strong had a stock-market account managed by a brother of one of the Driggs Company's vice-presidents. No large profits, however, were shown by the account. Commander Strong has since resigned from the navy to become head of Colombia's air force.

That the American Arms Company sold munitions to Colombia during an armistice between that country and Peru. As an official of the company bluntly put it, "we have chosen Colombia because they have money and Peru has very little."

That, according to a letter from Sterling J. Joyner, vice-president of the Electric Boat Company, to the company's president, Representative Joseph H. Martin of Massachusetts and the late Franklin Fort of New Jersey were named to the House Rules Committee partly by influence of the munitions lobbyists. This is denied by Mr. Martin and by friends of Mr. Fort, but since Mr. Joyner was writing to a business friend of many years' standing, to whom he had no apparent reason to misstate facts, his letter seems to deserve further investigation. By a familiar coincidence, Mr. Joyner is at present under a doctor's care, and unable to appear before the Senate Committee.

That, according to another Joyner letter, the Second 1929 Deficiency Bill was put through Congress partly by influence of the arms representatives. Joyner writes that high naval officers also aided, saying: "My reason for not putting this [a full description of how the bill was passed] in writing is out of respect for those who helped, and who were so powerful and friendly. The code of honor between men makes it unethical to name persons."

That in 1930, Assistant Secretary of the Navy Jahncke assured Representative John Q. Tilson, then Republican leader of the House, that he would "do everything in my power" to get submarine contracts for the Electric Boat Company. In a letter to Colonel Tilson, Mr. Jahncke promised: "It will work out that these submarines be assigned to the private shipbuilding company at New London as understood."

That an official of the American State Department suggested to Alfred J. Miranda, Jr., president of the American Arms Corporation, that he should get an injunction and test in the courts the legality of the Roosevelt embargo on arms shipments to Paraguay and Bolivia. (This is denied by the State Department.)

That representatives of American airplane firms in China planned to sell planes to the Hankow government through bribery of officials.

After these revelations, no reasonable person can feel the present system of munitions making for profit is anything but intolerable. This country's frequent pleas for world disarmament seem a form of peculiarly nauseous hypocrisy. However, other nations appear even more blameworthy. Other testimony before the Senate shows:

That the Electric Boat Company has long been associated with Vickers, Limited, and that a stockholder and dominating factor in both firms has been Sir Basil Zaharoff, greatest munitions profiteer in history. Between 1919 and 1930, Sir Basil received in commissions \$1,360,000 from the Electric Boat Company.

That until the World War, a third partner of these two companies was Whitehead Company, Limited, a British-owned Austro-Hungarian concern from which the German navy obtained American submarine secrets, and used them against American merchant vessels.

That Vickers, over the protests of the Electric Boat Company and apparently without the knowledge of the British Admiralty, has recently sold American and British submarine secrets to Japan.

That during the Tacna-Arica dispute between Chile and Peru, it was understood that the Electric Boat Company would sell only to Peru, Vickers only to Chile, each company splitting its profits with the other. Thus the Electric Boat Company's salesman at Lima could talk piously of the British intrigues in Chile, and Vickers salesman at Santiago of the American maneuvers in Peru. L. V. Spear, retired United States naval officer and vice-president of Electric Boat, writes Commander Sir Charles Craven, managing director of Vickers, on how to do business in Chile: "Graft is the real foundation of all South American business," adding that "at the last minute something extra is always needed to grease the way."

That the Electric Boat Company and the Bethlehem interests maintained a common bribe-distributor for South America, Captain Luis Aubry of Peru. Captain Aubry volunteered to have himself sent as Peruvian delegate to the 1924 disarmament conference at Geneva to fight any move for the outlawing of submarine warfare.

That Germany, since 1925, has maintained submarine-manufacturing plants, certainly in Holland, perhaps in other European countries, and that it has manufactured and sold small arms to all of Europe.

That Soley and Company, of London, sells vast amounts of munitions in all parts of the world, substantial portions of their supplies coming from the British government. The amounts are so large that, as the head of the firm wrote, they could "alter the balance of political power" in any small state.

That when the British government refused to countenance sales by Soley and Company in any South or Central American country except Nicaragua, the American Arms Corporation was used as a go-between.

That Soley and Company suggested to their American representatives that the United States be approached with a plan for buying military supplies and giving them to the Chinese in order to defend China against the Japanese. It was also suggested that the idea be broached to American "big business men," presumably because of the possible profit in selling to China, instead of giving her supplies free.

That after incendiary bullets had been prohibited, Soley and Company sold these under the name of "tracer bullets."

The revelations thus far made, we are told, only "scratch the surface." Already other American munitions manufacturers who are scheduled for public investigation later on are trying desperately to prevent open hearings, on the specious ground that these will be "detrimental to the military safety of the United States." There seems to us no doubt, however, that the facts already brought forward show what many of us have believed for a long time: that the international trade in munitions is a menace to peace that has no place in a civilized society. It is also clear, in our judgment, that private manufacture of arms, whether for use at home or abroad, ought to be ended at the earliest possible moment.

The Rift in Russian Relations

THE DEBT negotiations between the United States and Soviet Russia, so the Washington dispatches tell us, have virtually broken down. The American and Russian governments are so far apart that to the American conferees, at least, it seems hopeless to continue. As everyone knows, Soviet Russia owes the United States nothing. There are certain claims against her by American business men whose property was confiscated after the Bolshevik revolution; but these are offset, at least in large measure, by the damage done by the American invasion at Archangel. The chief items on the United States' side are Tsarist bonds sold in this country and the loan of nearly \$200,000,000 we made to the Kerensky government.

The Russians have never acknowledged any obligation on their part to pay these loans, and there are plenty of precedents for their position—especially when we recall that some of the Kerensky money was actually used for counter-revolutionary attempts to overthrow the present Russian government with the knowledge of the American government. They would be glad, however, to trade with the United States; and for this purpose, and in order to settle up the whole matter, they would be willing to pay excessive interest on a substantial

governmental loan from the United States over a number of years. Such a scheme would be the equivalent, in the course of twenty years or so, of a debt settlement of about \$100,000,000.

The American government has a plan that differs markedly from this. It wants the excessive interest to be paid on private as well as public debts. It wants the debt settlement to be made without reference to a long-term governmental credit. Instead of such a credit, it proposes loans for a period of only five years. It is obviously impossible for the U.S.S.R. to accept these conditions. It is negotiating not only with the United States but with the chief European powers as well. Excessively generous terms to us would be met by a demand for the revision of existing agreements with France and England, and under the Rapallo Treaty, Germany can claim treatment equal to the best given any other power. The U.S.S.R. is the one country in the world that is forced to keep its external credit 100-percent perfect. Thus it can make no bargain that is dependent upon the sale of given amounts of its goods in the United States within a stipulated time, as might be necessary to cover short-term credits. If this country insists upon demanding the impossible, Russia will simply take her orders elsewhere; and since trade channels are now being arranged for years to come, we shall be cut off for a long period of time from business amounting to hundreds of millions of dollars annually, which our manufacturers sorely need.

It is difficult to resist the idea that someone is deliberately sabotaging the negotiations with Russia. One such group might be American manufacturers who fear the competition of Russian goods; another might be rigid conservatives who dread American aid to the success of a Communist state; still another might conceivably be a pro-Japanese group, reluctant to help the country that so many people believe may presently be at war with Japan. The worst puzzle is why these groups should be influential with President Roosevelt, who encouraged the creation of an Export-Import Bank for the sole purpose of facilitating Russian trade, and talked so hopefully at one time about its value.

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Textile Trouble

1: New England on Strike

THE STREETS are still dark, the big oblong of the mills is gray and silent. From a distance comes a faint noise of the sea. There are already men standing in threes and fours on street corners. It is New Bedford the morning after Labor Day, the day set for the big textile strike—"The first strike of its kind in the history of the labor movement of America," as the organizers have been telling the workers in the mass meetings throughout the nation.

This strike is in the nature of a showdown. It was fathered by the speed-up and stretch-out and mothered by evasions of the code, by the disregard of Section 7a. People can no longer live on what they are getting: they can no longer exist under the conditions under which they work. Too many skilled workers have been discharged and reemployed as "learners"—one means of avoiding the minimum-wage clause. Too many workers have been forced to do three people's work in one day. In the past five years less and less of every dollar earned by the mills has gone to the worker.

It is a time of anxiety. Are "they" going to come out? Will there be a break for the mills? I'm striking and you're striking, but are the others? Our mill is striking but what about the other mills? And if we tie up New Bedford, what about the rest of the towns in New England and what about Manchester and Lowell and Lawrence? What about Passaic and Paterson?—These are the things the workers are thinking as they watch the crowd on the street become larger, as the streets get bright. The small groups have flowed into each other; the streets are filled. The Hathaway mill stares empty-windowed at the mounting crowd. On the mill side there is no one. A guard at the gate, a few policemen, very few, no imposing display of armed force—as yet. On the side away from the mill, every language in the world is spoken: French, Portuguese and Italian predominate. Everybody is good-tempered, even jolly.

No one has gone in. There is no picket line. There does not need to be. All the workers are out on the street opposite the mill. There are no scabs against whom to picket the mill. These mills in the South End are out 100 percent. Organization is no new thing to the New Bedford workers. They have gone through many a struggle. In 1928, the big good-natured Portuguese women who look like full-blown peonies snatched clubs from policemen's lifted hands and hit back. The black-eyed little French Canadians fought like wildcats. We wonder if the North Side is holding as well and hurry over there. The two manufacturing sections of New Bedford are far apart. We drive past

sleeping old-fashioned houses, past the business section. Down the steep street near the Wamsutta mills the workers are gathered. Here one sees an old-fashioned type of worker. Middle-aged prissy Americans, they hold themselves apart from the foreign worker but they are out here striking in the street for all that. Some people tell you four people have gone in. Others say they have counted seven, a handful. It's the same in the Nashewena mills—it's the same in twenty-five mills in New Bedford. A 100-percent strike—only the three great tire-fabric mills have not come out, Firestone, Goodrich and Fisk.

People begin to drift away slowly. Everyone is relieved, everyone seems happy. It seems more like a fiesta than a strike. There is just time to eat something before the mass meeting in the park. Yesterday William Beatty had made a fighting speech. He refused in a roundabout way the unity proposals of the National Textile Workers' Union, the left-wing, Communist-dominated union which before the N.R.A. was strong in New Bedford. This union has already formed a merger in Paterson. The local United Textile Workers' leaders will not hear of it.

Today's meeting is short. There are three messages from the organizer Sylva; one a new one. "Don't think of yourselves as New Bedford workers—your fight is the fight of all the textile workers of America. It is as wide as the land." The next is "Trust our President. He will see we get justice." Yes, the steel workers were told that and the automobile workers—one knows the result and a heavy feeling of defeat comes over me as I look at the hopeful people in their holiday mood. Dressed as for church instead of for work. The third message is concrete: "We're out 100 percent except the tire fabrics. We've got to get them out. Everybody go over to Fisk and Goodrich and picket; *Now.*"

The meeting breaks up. We go over and now they come in groups. Men and girls, old and young, hundreds and hundreds of them streaming over to the great factories, and filling the streets in front. Mr. Beatty and Mr. Sylva lead a small picket line on the mill side. On the opposite side the gay crowd calls to the workers who throng to the windows. There are few police.

The papers come out with screaming headlines starting a Red witch-hunt. They say the left-wing textile leader, Ann Burlak, is in hiding. But we have seen Ann Burlak quietly attending the meeting. Ann Burlak, secretary of the National Textile Workers' Union, will be arrested. What for? Oh, anything will do.

We read the papers on our way to Pawtucket

and Fall River. The papers say that yesterday, Labor Day, in the big mass meeting the independent unions in Fall River voted not to come out. The Associated Press reports Pawtucket working as usual. But in Fall River the dreary, the workers are buzzing excitedly in the street. The mills are tied up. The United Textile Workers have struck 100 percent and they have the loom fixers. So the mills are tied up, perhaps over 60 percent.

The Pepperell mills are being picketed by a gay band of young girls. There are silent mills in Fall River from whose windows stovepipes protrude as in Moscow in 1921. This is where fly-by-night sweatshops operated. Other mills have been torn down. Piles of gray stones lie about.

In Pawtucket a lively meeting is going on. The union hall is full of weavers and spinners. The place hums with life. A national organizer, Elizabeth Nord, is making a comprehensive talk. She is slender, young, full of fighting spirit. Later she tells me thousands are out. The Associated Press story has been contradicted. She calls for pickets for a mill a little out of town where they make Fruit of the Loom. The real story will be the coming out of those mills not already on strike. In the South they have called out the militia. The tone of the evening papers is more sensational.

Back in New Bedford we hear there is trouble near the tire factories. A large crowd has gathered in an open square nearby. It is after ten. Mr. Beatty has stopped picketing. Fifteen thousand people have been down around the tire-fabric mills this evening. The police have been reinforced by the khaki-clad motorcycle cops who hoot their sirens as they tear past, by members of the liquor squad, by the traffic police. For the first time there is tenseness. Thousands of workers are in the open space, near the mills. They are pale under the high arc lights. The day which began quietly has been one of mounting excitement. It is as if one could see and feel the massed will of the workers who are out directed towards the workers who have not yet come out.

The young Socialist editor of the local labor paper mounts a gray outcropping of rock and makes a speech about everyone's being on tomorrow's picket line. A Negro near us calls out, "How about the night-shift? What about a picket line now!" They form a picket line, the editor in front. The crowd swarms forward behind him. At the street by the mill they are stopped. The police bar the way to the mill, the crowd pushes on under the pressure of those behind. Stones are hurled—the chief orders the workers back. The crowd breaks. Motorcycle police and police wagons herd the crowd down the street, but their action might well be a lesson to the police of other cities. There have been no beatings and no arrests.

Wednesday morning mass picketing was barred in front of Fisk and Goodyear on the South Side and on the North Side in front of Firestone.

Wednesday noon one picket alone walks up and

down, up and down, in front of the Goodyear plant. It is none other than Mr. William Beatty. Up and down he walks on his endless patrol. No workers are allowed within the police lines. The New York correspondents are sharply questioned. There is a squib in the paper about a car with a New York license supposed to contain "outside agitators" and "literature." It contained its owner, Mr. Waldo Frank. The morning papers also contain statements from the managers of the three factories that they expect no trouble. Not a chance in the world of these contented workers striking. We walk along by the mill. A group of a dozen men are leaning on a wall facing the mill. "Staying out?" we ask.

"Yeah, we're twisters from Fisk. We're staying out," they grin. We drive blocks around the enormous mill, then down one side where there are only a scattered handful of police. We see the street lined with an excited crowd.

Girls are pouring out of the back entrance of the Fisk factory. The crowd is applauding.

"Are you coming out?" we ask.

"Sure thing," they chorus.

"Many of you?" "We're 'most all out." "Yes, only the boss men left." The word goes from mouth to mouth.

"Fisk has struck! Fisk has struck—the fabric workers are out!"

The word has gone out over the wire to Washington, "Fisk is out." The tire-fabric factories are all closed. The first victory.

MARY HEATON VORSE.

New Bedford, Mass.

2. Gastonia: Before the Battle

TO MANY persons, no doubt, the news of the impending textile strike came as a thunder clap. They had been told that the N.I.R.A., the N.R.A. and the code remedied all the grievances of the textile workers. Child labor had been abolished. Wages had been raised and other conditions bettered. The right of the workers to organize had been written into the law of the land. Things were now all right. Then why start making trouble?

For a few weeks in the summer of 1933, most of the things were true, or seemed to be. Prosperity had certainly come to the mills, and to a certain extent it had come to the workers—as evidenced by the often repeated story that in certain Southern mill towns, for instance, it was impossible to buy a second-hand automobile. But all this was only temporary. Things soon began sliding downhill again. When I went back, a short time before the present strike began, to Gastonia, North Carolina, where the 1929 strike was marked by the deepest bitterness and violence, I found both workers and mill owners restive and unhappy. It may be useful to discuss their problems separately.

When I talked to the mill owners, I quickly

found that the situation in Gastonia is from their point of view a very special one. Approximately 100 of the 106 mills in the county manufacture combed cotton yarn—accounting for 85 percent of the total national production. Combed cotton yarn is used principally in the manufacture of quality mercerized cotton goods; chiefly the more expensive type of women's wear. The biggest competitor of mercerized cotton goods is rayon—and rayon is the Gastonia mill owner's wailing wall.

"Here's the set-up," I was told. "Under the terms of the A.A.A. we have to pay a processing tax of 4.2 cents a pound on raw cotton. In the manufacture of combed cotton yarn one-third of each pound of raw cotton is lost or discarded. This brings our processing tax up to 6 cents a pound on the finished product.

"Now take raw cotton. Including the processing tax we have paid an average of 15 cents a pound on cotton, whereas before the code we paid around 6½ or 7 cents—more than a 100-percent increase. That's what the A.A.A. has done for us. Then, on top of all that, our labor costs have been increased 25 percent by our code.

"Rayon, on the other hand, gets the breaks all the way around. Under our code we can operate 80 hours a week. Rayon mills, on the other hand, operate continuously. Because of the chemical nature of rayon they can't shut down in the middle of a process because the stuff would immediately gum up and be ruined. But they can find a way to limit their hours—if the government tells them they have to.

"That's just a small thing, though. The big advantage rayon gets under the N.R.A. is that there is no processing tax levied on it. During the past year the cotton-textile industry has paid out over \$135,000,000 in processing taxes and rayon hasn't paid a dime. With a set-up like that no wonder rayon can undersell us!

"We've gone ahead and built up a market and now rayon is taking that market away from us. We know that rayon is here to stay—make no mistake about that. All we want is to be placed on the parity that existed before the N.R.A. We want a processing tax levied on rayon and other competing fibers. We've had conference after conference in Washington, and action has been promised time and again, but nothing has ever been done about it."

Not even the most optimistic mill owner, however, believes that the imposition of a processing tax on rayon, and other governmental regulations, will bring recovery to Gastonia. That depends entirely on general recovery and that—"Hell, mister, that's what we're hoping for."

Meanwhile, as Gastonia cotton-mill owners fuss about the disparity between cotton and rayon, and talk about the "unreasonableness" of the strike, thousands of Gastonia workers accept direction from their leaders and prepare themselves to fight this thing out. And other thousands, watching

the strike with equal interest, wonder when they are going to have a job again. Out of a population of 21,000 workers, approximately 6,000 were unemployed before the strike. Many of these have found temporary employment with the F.E.R.A., but at least 2,000 of them are receiving direct aid from governmental agencies. Of the thousands of workers who came into Gastonia last year, 90 percent have drifted back to the hollows and the hills again. Of the remaining 10 percent it is estimated that 3 percent were gainfully employed when I was there. The other 7 percent are being supported by federal relief.

Southern textile workers feel that they have been betrayed. It is impossible to emphasize the faith they had in the code. They thought they were going to get a break at last. A President in the White House who was "for" them. When the code went into effect there were dances and celebrations. They now feel that those dances and celebrations were a little premature. Wages were supposed to be raised. In many cases they were lowered. In addition, the rise in retail prices has more than offset any increase in wages. Child labor was abolished and there was a great to-do about it. But child labor, because of the cheapness of adult labor, was being abolished long before the N.R.A. came into being. In Gastonia, for instance, there were less than 200 children under sixteen employed in the mills when the code went into effect. Hours were supposed to be shortened. In many Southern mills they were. Workers no longer worked ten and twelve hours a day for \$3 and \$4 a week. In such mills the code brought a definite improvement. In other mills, however, reduced hours meant a tightening of the screws on the "stretch-out" system.

About the only thing the N.R.A. has brought the Southern textile worker is a feeling that he has a "right" to organize. The importance of this feeling cannot be emphasized too much. It brought thousands of workers into the ranks of union labor. Without it the present strike would hardly have been possible—at least in the South. Certainly it would not have shown the strength it has.

The South has always been open-shop territory. Southern mill owners say it always will be. This strike is going to be fought and fought bitterly. Six men have already been killed and hundreds have suffered minor injuries. There will be others. If it prolongs itself for any length of time a reign of terror may be expected. But the workers fully realize what is at stake. If this strike can be won, life will be a little more tolerable for them. They have something to fight for and they are going to fight. This strike, finally, is to the textile worker what the San Francisco strike was to the longshoreman. After it is over he will know where he stands with the administration and where the administration stands with him. He will also know if the cotton textile code is a code or just another scrap of paper. It's the big showdown.

Gastonia, N. C.

HAMILTON BASSO.

To the Finland Station: I

6. Decline of the Revolutionary Tradition: Renan

YOU HAVE that thing which is so rare," Michelet had once said to a younger writer, "that thing which they all [all the literary men] lack: the sense of the people and its sap. In my own case, I feel, as I reread what I have sent you [the first volume of the "History of the Revolution"], how much I still lack myself. . . . My poetry is sometimes obscure, inaccessible to the great number."

The French bourgeoisie, who in the great Revolution had seized power from the feudal aristocracy, had, through all the readjustments of the forms and accouterments of government and in the teeth both of monarchist reaction and of socialist working-class revolt, maintained its position as the dominant class; and, except when spasmodically reawakened by the Royalists, the Bonapartists or the clergy, its revolutionary tradition grew feeble. The word "revolution" was coming to connote working-class interference from below with bourgeois property arrangements. The nineteenth century in France was a great literary period, a period perhaps comparable, for fiction and history, to the Elizabethan period for poetry or the Italian Renaissance for painting. But this literature, for all the immense range in it of the social imagination, was no longer a revolutionary literature. The enthusiasm for science of the Enlightenment persisted without the political enthusiasm of the Enlightenment; and, since Romanticism, the idea of literary art, rather than the mere eloquence, wit and skill at rhetorical presentation which had distinguished the eighteenth century, was becoming more elaborate and more subtle. And Michelet, for all his attempts to reaffirm, to keep always in the foreground of his activity, the original revolutionary principles, was turning out to be one of the chief ornaments of this highly developed literature. With his novelist's sympathetic insight into different kinds of human beings, his sense of social and moral complexity and his artistic virtuosity, he was to live to be read with delight by people who did not share his opinions.

Nevertheless, he was to pass out of fashion. The writer of an article called "Why Michelet Is No Longer Read" predicted in 1898, on the occasion of the Michelet centenary, that the celebration would not do Michelet justice. Michelet is no longer read, he says, because people no longer understand him. Though he was followed in his day by the whole generation of 1850, he commits for the studious and skeptical young men of the end of the century the supreme sin of being an apostle, a man of passionate feeling and conviction. Michelet

created the religion of the Revolution, and the Revolution is not popular today, when the Academicians put it in its place, when persons who would have been nothing without it veil their faces at the thought of the Jacobin terror, when even those who have nothing against it manage to patronize it. Besides, Michelet attacked the priesthood, and the Church is now treated with respect.

Let us take a last look at him, in Couture's drawing, before passing on to his successors: the Michelet of 1842, with his mask of determined will, which seems always to have been straining, never relaxed—the long plebeian jaw, the self-assertive chin, the set mouth, the fine trenchant nose with its distended and mettlesome nostrils, the eyes deep and sharp, sheltering a sensitiveness taxed by interior struggle, under eyebrows as heavy as wings which make the creases of perpetual effort.

Now look at Renan and Taine. With Michelet, the man has made the mask. But here it is the profession which has made it: Renan, with his great belly, his pudgy hands, his round and puffy face, his heavily drooping porcine eyelids—the most intelligent and honest of all the French abbés, but fundamentally a French abbé; Taine (in Bonnat's portrait), with his spectacles and his myopic-looking eyes, his bald dome, his wilting imperial, his high conversational eyebrows—the most brilliant of all the French professors, but still from tip to toe a French professor. Michelet, the man of an unsettled and passionate generation, has forged his own personality, created his own trade and established his own place. Renan and Taine, on the other hand, are the members of learned castes. Both, like Michelet, set the search for truth above personal considerations: Renan, who had studied for the priesthood, left the seminary and stripped off his robe as soon as he knew that it was impossible for him to accept the Church's version of history, and the scandal of the "Life of Jesus" cost him his chair at the Collège de France; and the materialistic principles of Taine proved such a stumbling-block to his superiors throughout his academic career that he was finally obliged to give up the idea of teaching. But, though rejected by their professional colleagues, they came before long to be accepted as among the official wise men of their society, a society now temporarily stabilized. Both ended as members of the Academy ("When one is *someone*, why should one want to be *something*?" Edmond de Goncourt wondered about Renan)—whereas it is only a few years ago that Michelet and Quinet were given burial in the Panthéon.

Both Renan and Taine, of the generation twenty

or thirty years younger than Michelet, had felt his influence, and combining, as Michelet had done, immense learning with artistic gifts, were to continue the recreation of the past. Renan tells us with what excitement he read Michelet's history at school:

The century reached me through the cracks in a broken cement. . . . With amazement I discovered that there were laymen who were serious and learned; I saw that there existed something outside of antiquity and the Church . . . the death of Louis XIV was no longer the end of the world for me. Ideas and feelings appeared which had never had any expression either in antiquity or in the seventeenth century.

But the cooling off of the French bourgeois in regard to political-social issues during the latter half of the nineteenth century may be seen very clearly in Renan. Not long after leaving the seminary in 1845, he wrote a book called "The Future of Science," in which he presented a vision of human progress hardly less fervid than those of the eighteenth century. But as the century wore on, Renan's enthusiasm and certainty gradually seemed to abate. He continued to hope for progress, but it was a progress with no real political basis. Where Michelet had forfeited his posts rather than take the oath of allegiance to Louis Bonaparte, Renan considered it a matter of no consequence:

My opinion is that only those should have refused who had directly taken part in former governments . . . or who at the time had the definite intention of entering into a conspiracy against the new one. The refusal of others, though admirable in itself if it is prompted by a delicacy of conscience, is in my opinion regrettable. For besides depriving the public service of those who are best fitted to fill it, it implies that everything that is done and everything that happens ought to be taken seriously. . . . In my own case, nothing has yet been asked of me; I confess that I don't consider myself sufficiently important to make an exception among my colleagues, who are no more partisans of the present regime than I am. It is clear that for a very long time we must stand aside from politics. Let us not keep the burdens, if we do not want the advantages.

Yet there is here still an ideal of public service. Renan ran for office in 1869 on a platform of, "No revolution; no war; a war will be as disastrous as a revolution." And even when the war was in progress and the Prussians were besieging Paris, he took an unpopular line in advocating peace negotiations.

The French bourgeois intellectual after 1870 was in the singular position of belonging at the same time to a dominant class and a defeated nation, of at the same time enjoying advantages and submitting to humiliation; and this paradox produced curious attitudes. Edmond de Goncourt, in his journal, gives an illuminating picture of Renan during the Franco-Prussian War and the Commune—we see him praising the Germans, to whom in his field he owed so much, in the face of the loud protests of his companions; waving his short arms and quoting

Scripture against the prophets of French revenge; maintaining that for the "idealist," the emotion of patriotism had been rendered obsolete by Catholicism, that "the fatherland of the idealists is the country where they are allowed to think." One day when he had been standing at the window watching a regiment pass by amidst the shouts of the crowd, he contemptuously turned away: "There's not a man among them all," he cried, "who is capable of an act of virtue!"

But what did Renan mean by virtue? On what did he base his code? Renan's work, for all his smiling indulgence, has a certain austerity behind it. In what school had this virtue been learned? It was the ecclesiastical discipline which had made Renan: the sense of duty and the self-sufficiency which contributed to the very moral courage he was to display in opposition to the Church had been derived from his training for the priesthood, from that Catholicism which, as he said, had made patriotism obsolete, but in which he had ceased to believe. It is almost as if virtue were with Renan a mere habit which he has been induced to acquire on false pretenses. Though his devotion had been at first directed to the ends of the Enlightenment, to the scientific criticism of the Scriptures which supplemented the polemics of Voltaire, the Enlightenment itself, as I have indicated, was in a sense on the wane with the attainment by the French bourgeoisie of their social-economic objects; and Renan's virtue came more and more to seem, not like Michelet's, a social engine, but a luminary hung in the void. In a hierarchy of moral merit drawn up in one of his prefaces, he puts the saint at the top of the list and the man of action at the bottom: moral excellence, he says, must always lose something as soon as it enters into practical activity because it must lend itself to the imperfection of the world. And this conception caused Michelet concern: he rebuked "the disastrous doctrine, which our friend Renan has too much commended, that passive internal freedom, preoccupied with its own salvation, which delivers the world to evil." It is curious to contrast the tone of Renan's speech at the inauguration of a medallion of Michelet, Quinet and Mickiewicz at the Collège de France in 1884 with that of his combative predecessors. Renan's emphasis is all on the importance of the calm pursuit of truth, though the turmoil may be raging around us of those who are forced to make a practical issue of it. But he corrects himself: "No, we are posted in sign of war; peace is not our lot." Yet the relation between the rioter in the street and the scholar in his study seems to have been completely dissolved.

In "The Origins of Christianity," Renan's attitude towards his own time appears very plainly through his story. In any sense in which it is possible to describe human productions as impartial, this enchanting account of the decline of the ancient world and the rise of the Christian religion may be said to be impartial. The effort toward universal comprehension and justice is one of the most im-

pressive things about Renan. But his very artistic form has its bias, the very fall of his sentences has its bias; and before he has finished his story, he *has* undeniably tipped the scales. In "The Origins of Christianity," which begins with a volume on Jesus and ends with a volume on Marcus Aurelius, it must be confessed that somehow or other Marcus Aurelius gets the better of it. The "Life of Jesus," which the Goncourts characterized as "Michelet Fénelonized," has always seemed to me the least successful section. Renan makes Jesus a "charming doctor," tends, in fact, to make him a sort of Renan, and minimizes the symbolic tragedy which was to shake and fascinate the world. He does better perhaps with Paul, but he makes us dislike him. The episode we remember best is Paul's arrival in Athens to preach the Christian gospel and his outcry against the Greek statues: "O chaste and lovely images," Renan cries out in his turn, "of the true gods and goddesses!—this ugly little Jew has stigmatized you with the name of idols!" And so when Renan comes to the Apocalypse, which he interprets as a radical tract directed against the Roman Empire, he does not fail to put the whole exploit in an ironical light from the beginning by commenting on the extreme inappropriateness of John's having selected the little island of Patmos, more suitable, as Renan remarks, for some delightful little classical idyl of the type of "Daphnis and Chloe," for the forging of his fulminations and the concoction of his esthetic monstrosities. The truth is that the moral earnestness of the Jews, to whose literature Renan has devoted his life, is coming to seem to him unsympathetic. And when we arrive at Marcus Aurelius, Renan's preference for the Graeco-Roman culture as contrasted with the agitation of the Christians unmistakably emerges and has the last word. We can note how, almost imperceptibly, his interest and emphasis have shifted since he published "The Life of Jesus" nearly twenty years before. "Marcus Aurelius and his noble masters," Renan had written then, "have had no enduring effect on the world. Marcus Aurelius leaves behind him delightful books, an execrable son, a dying world. Jesus remains for humanity an inexhaustible principle of moral regeneration. For the great number, philosophy is not enough; they must have sainthood." But in the volume on Marcus Aurelius (published in 1881), Renan manages to give us the impression that the Romans, through their legal reforms, were tending by themselves and independently of the evangelism of the Christians, to put humanitarian principles into practice. Was Christianity necessary, after all? we are prompted to ask ourselves. Will not a society sufficiently developed arrive at this point of view by itself? Marcus Aurelius has all Jesus' love of virtue and is a Roman gentleman as well; and, ruminating sadly on human affairs as he wages his uncongenial warfare against the forces battering in the Empire, he is presented as the perfect exemplar for the French intellectual world of the period after 1870—disil-

lusioned with its political tradition, resigned to its national defeat, disgusted with contemporary tendencies, but persisting in the individual pursuit of such ends, the private cultivation of such qualities, as still seem to be valuable in themselves.

His [Marcus Aurelius'] virtue was based, like ours, upon reason, upon nature. Saint Louis was a very virtuous man and, according to the ideas of his time, a very great king, because he was a Christian; Marcus Aurelius was the most pious of men, not because he was a pagan, but because he was an emancipated man. He was an honor to human nature, and not to a particular religion. He has achieved the perfect goodness, the absolute indulgence, the indifference tempered with pity and scorn. "To be resigned, as one passes one's life in the midst of false and unjust men"—that was the sage's program. And he was right. The most solid goodness is that which is based on perfect ennui, on the clear realization that everything in this world is frivolous and without real foundation. Never was there a more legitimate cult, and it is still our cult today.

Such a morality is attractive to read about, but it will let down rather than sustain its generation. What kind of champions can be recruited by a preacher who is obliged to have recourse for his sanctions to the stoicism of Marcus Aurelius?—by one who begins by assuring us that we should value the saint above all men, but ends by recommending as a model a sage who plays the man of action with no conviction of the action's value?

Renan himself was, however, sustained: he was sustained to accomplish his historical work. And "The Origins of Christianity" is a masterpiece—perhaps the greatest of all histories of ideas. What Renan can give us incomparably, what we get out of him so that we never forget it, is the sense of the way in which doctrines, conceptions, symbols, undergo continual transformations at the hands of different persons and races. With a sensitiveness of intelligence and a subtlety of presentation which have never been surpassed, he follows the words and the story of Jesus as they pass into varied combinations and with every new combination become themselves something new: the Christianity of the Apostles is no longer the Christianity of Jesus; the Christianity of the Scriptures changes as it is attracted toward the Greeks or the Jews; the Christianity of the Rome of Nero is quite different from the Christianity of Judea. Our ideas are all spun from filaments infinitely long and mingled which require an analysis infinitely delicate.

But note that the emphasis with Renan is thus chiefly upon the relativity of religious and philosophical conceptions. There is a relativity, too, in Michelet—his actors play different roles in different historical situations according to their personal capacities in relation to changing circumstances; but the dominating values are not in doubt. With Renan, of the later generation, the values themselves are beginning to waver; we find him talking about "the clear realization that everything in this world

is frivolous and without real foundation." Note, furthermore, that whereas with Michelet we are in the midst of human happenings, among which the propagation of ideas figures merely as one of many kinds of activity, with Renan we are occupied primarily with ideas, behind which the rest of human history is merely filled in as a background—it is the frame on which the web has been woven, but what we are concerned with is tracing the web. Renan's function is to take us through the texts of the re-

ligion and wisdom of antiquity—even though by a spell of imagination he is creating about us as we read them the social atmosphere of the times in which they were written. Though "The Origins of Christianity" is still Michelet's organic history, it is now the history not of man but of man's formulated ideas.

EDMUND WILSON.

The fifth article in Mr. Wilson's series will appear in an early issue.—THE EDITORS.

The United Front in France

MOST OBSERVERS now agree that what happened in Paris on February 6 was a planned attempt (premature because Police Prefect Chiappe's dismissal had been unexpected) by well armed fascist bands to invade the Chamber of Deputies in order to destroy the parliamentary regime and set up a government that would represent a combination of right groups bent on wiping out the radicals.

These events so shocked not only the proletarians and peasants of France but all honest republicans as well, that there followed a flood of anti-fascist demonstrations whose vigor and size have completely altered the character of French politics: unity in the radical forces has been brought about.

On February 7 the C.G.T. (Socialist trade unions) ordered a general strike of twenty-four hours for February 12 and the Socialist Party called its demonstration off in support of that strike. The C.G.T.U. (Communist trade unions) called on their members to strike during the same hours. Then in the St. Denis section of Paris, the most popular proletarian area in France, an unprecedented thing happened. Against orders of the Central Committee of the Communist Party, but under the leadership of Doriot, Communist Mayor of St. Denis, a member of the Executive Committee of the Communist Party, the Communists of that region set up, together with the Seine Federation of the Socialist Party, a vigilance committee, which—operating under a pact of fair play, no recrimination and holding to the objectives of the manifestation—organized the demonstration in Paris.

On February 12 came the answer of the workers and peasants and republicans to the coup of the sixth. In Paris there were 150,000 marchers. A larger number went on strike. And the answer from the provinces, which have always been fiercely republican, was even more unequivocal. Everywhere there were mighty manifestations: 100,000 at Marseilles, 40,000 at Toulouse, 50,000 at Bordeaux. Everywhere Socialists and Communists paraded together, although except in Paris, without the benefit of an official united front. No marring incidents occurred. The effect on the rank and file of both parties was tremendous. Unity became the demand

everywhere, especially in Paris, where under the strong guiding hands of Doriot and two Socialists, Zyromski and Pivert, the demonstration had been an inspiring spectacle.

Henceforth every time a fascist demonstration was scheduled, a counter-demonstration of Socialists and Communists took place and unofficial united fronts ran fascists out of town and prevented them from reaching meeting halls. On March 11 the Socialists' National Council gave to local federations the authority to engage in local united actions.

At this point the National Government obtained decree-laws whereby it could arbitrarily reduce any item in the government's expenditures in order to obtain a balanced budget. Its first action under the decree-laws was to reduce civil-service salaries.

The Expulsion of Doriot.—Meanwhile in Paris the Central Committee of the Communist Party condemned Doriot for setting up his vigilance committee jointly with the leaders of the Socialist Party, and demanded that he dissolve the committee at once. This Doriot refused to do and a feud within Communist Party circles began over whether one could traffic with the "reformists" of the Socialist Party to the extent of treating with their leaders for united action.

In the next few days the population of St. Denis learned of the controversy that had been raging in upper party circles since February 12. Doriot accused the Communist Party of engaging in a united-front action only as a maneuver and declared that both the Socialist and Communist Parties, although accepting the idea of united front, at heart each still believed that it was possible to achieve unification of the working-class forces only under its own banner. He was answered by Thorez, Secretary-General of the Communist Party, who stated that Doriot had capitulated before Social Democracy, and hence was a factionalist, who did not want unity, since he obviously was trying to shatter the unity within the Communist Party. Doriot soon afterwards was expelled as a factionalist.

Doriot's Line Is Adopted.—But just as Trotsky's policy came to be adopted after he had been ex-

pelled for advocating it, so here the Communist Party now turned around and adopted the policy for which it had expelled Doriot, who, it should be remarked, had in the meantime been reelected in St. Denis by a tremendous vote.

On May 27 the Communist Party had once again refused to accept an invitation from the Socialists for a joint demonstration to commemorate the victims of the Commune. But on June 12 the Communists addressed a letter to the Socialist Party asking for unity. The conciliatory tone of the letter was unprecedented. However, while the Socialist Party was considering its reply, *L'Humanité* did not let up in its attacks on Social Democracy.

The Socialists had only one recourse, and Paul Fauré, the Secretary-General, replied, asking "how can you ask us to join in the anti-fascist fight if you sincerely think we are the chief support of the bourgeoisie?"

L'Humanité did not attack this letter of Fauré's, but answered with a broad hint that the difficulties could be overcome. *Le Populaire*, the Socialist paper, then printed side by side the text of the non-aggression pact between the U.S.S.R. and France, and a suggested text for a non-aggression pact between the Communist and Socialist Parties.

The Unified Front Pact.—On June 25 the Central Committee of the Communist Party sent the following terms to the Socialists:

1. Common action (a) with the objective of mobilizing the population against fascist bands in order to disarm and dissolve them; (b) against the decree-laws; (c) against the Hitler terror; (d) for the freedom of Thälmann and all anti-fascist prisoners.
2. Joint meetings to be held in all localities, which, together with the anti-fascist counter-manifestations, should develop to the point of a general strike against the decree-laws.
3. No attacks upon one another during joint action, although each party could carry on its own propaganda.

In a series of sympathetic articles in *Le Populaire* prior to the meeting of the Socialist National Council, Leon Blum enumerated some further conditions: that a pact of good faith and agreement to exclude all party propaganda during joint actions be signed; that the pact declare frankly that the fight against fascism involved in the first place the defense of "the necessary liberties that fascism tends to destroy"; and that the pact be considered not as a method of evading the problem of organic unity, but as an approach to it.

On July 8, 100,000 Parisian Socialists and Communists demonstrated against Colonel de La Rocque's demonstration of 6,000 at the Arc de Triomphe. Huge united-front meetings were taking place all over France, causing *Le Populaire* to comment: "The desire and demand for unity, latent for so many years, have suddenly shot to the surface, propelled by the shock of the fascist aggression."

On July 15, a meeting took place between the leaders of the two parties. Its stenographic record reveals an almost unbelievable willingness to concede and be cordial on both sides. That the Communists' policy had changed was evident in their willingness to allow all the small Communist opposition or "renegade" groups to be represented on local united-front committees and their readiness to forgo a personal presentation of the case for unity before the Socialist National Council. On the part of the Socialists, their willingness to consider a general strike against the decree-laws, their proposal for a joint committee of control, their talk of organic unity, were something new. On July 16 the Socialist National Council by an overwhelming vote accepted the Communist invitation. An urgent letter was then addressed to the Secretariat of the Labor and Socialist (Second) International asking it to communicate with the E.C.C.I. to ascertain whether the line of the French Communist Party represented a uniform policy for the whole Third International.

Other factors influenced the change in policy—undoubtedly made with the full approval of Moscow—of the French Communist Party: Russia's reentry into the community of nations, her attempt to establish normal commercial relations with the great capitalist countries, her patent desire for peace, her self-protective policy of non-aggression pacts. The Nazi victory in Germany, with one of its slogans demanding annexation of the Ukraine while the victory itself seemed so largely the result of disunity between the German Socialists and Communists—and this in turn followed by the Hitler-Pilsudski *rapprochement*—must have provoked a reconsideration of the Communist International's theory of "social fascism" which up to now has made real unity impossible in the working class. This menace of Germany in the west and Japan's aggressive designs on the eastern borders have been the focal points of all of Litvinov's diplomacy. Obviously in the interplay of pacts and alliances in Western Europe, France is the key piece. And what better assurance that France will live up to her treaty obligations could the Soviets have than the united support of the Socialists and Communists of France?

What of the Future?—There has been a theoretical *rapprochement* between the two parties on other points. At the June meeting of the National Council of the Communist Party, the report of the Central Committee indicated that the party no longer considered fascism an inevitable prelude to the dictatorship of the proletariat, or a development necessary to destroy democratic illusions among the masses. On the contrary, the report declared:

It is the fascists who fight against bourgeois democracy in order to destroy it. It is the fascists who wish to suppress Parliament because it is able in a certain measure to be utilized by the working class in its fight against the bourgeoisie. . . . But they [the Communists]

have, do and will defend all the democratic liberties conquered by the masses themselves.

That is a position acceptable to any Social Democrat. Thorez is said to have declared that he prefers to live in France under a bourgeois democracy than in Germany under a dictatorship, a position, Communists have always maintained, that implied that you were ready to defend bourgeois democracy with arms against the forces of a foreign dictatorship.

On the part of the Socialists it is undoubtedly true that since the events of February 6 and the secession of the Neo-Socialists, large, influential sections of the party have lost hope for a peaceful transition to socialism, and the party is quietly preparing to meet the fascists on another terrain. In a sense the center of political gravity in the Socialist Party has shifted from its parliamentary fraction to its demonstrations in the boulevards.

What will be the outcome of the united front? Everyone admits it is only a temporary measure, that it must lead either to a new split or to closer unity. It is a defensive measure undertaken against fascist aggression where permanence depends on whether the two parties can agree on a positive program for ending the economic crisis, which is the ultimate source of all fascist movements. At the last congress of the French Socialist Party a majority was almost attained for a positive attack upon the crisis in the form of a platform that emphasizes socialization of credit and basic monopoly industries in order to give the government enough leverage over the rest of the French economy to introduce a planned society. Will the Communist Party of France concur in such a program of a mixed economy of socialism and capitalism? Certainly permanent unity in the working class hinges on whether the two parties can agree upon a positive, constructive plan for solving the crisis.

Meanwhile the united front between the two parties has had momentous effects. In sentiment and attitude the working class of France is no longer on the defensive, as the huge, enthusiastic and cordial crowds that come out for the joint demonstrations prove. The various fascist groups in Paris are no longer a menace. French fascism today is weaker than when it first started, despite all the money that has been poured into it. But nowhere was the power of a united working class better demonstrated than when the united front in Paris compelled the French General Staff to move its spectacular military maneuvers away from Paris. To anyone who understands how strong a hold the military has over the French nation this is a remarkable achievement.

In the international field the French experiment is being closely watched by all the other parties in the Socialist International. It has initiated immensely salutary discussions on the possibility of a pact between the two Internationals. It has already influenced the position of the American Socialist and Communist Parties.

JOSEPH P. LASH.

In the Lincoln Country

EN ROUTE to southern Illinois: the Federal Union of Filling Station Employees had just had a strike. It had been a good fight, but the day before an official A.F. of L. representative had come along and for no apparent reason called it off. The men had accordingly been going back to fill out applications for their old jobs and had been told to "sit at the telephone" waiting for a possible call to return to work.

At the union meeting we attended, they were telling their experiences, but not in the doleful manner you might expect from men who had just lost a strike. The business agent got up and said someone had suggested a beer party after the meeting and how about it? Everybody thought it a good idea.

We were introduced to the chairman after the meeting and learned from him about the ideology of one section of this labor movement that is coming into existence all over the country. The brother seemed well pleased that the experienced A.F. of L. men had got the strike off their hands. "There were only two things the matter with the strike," he said. "In the first place, it should never have been called at all; only the boys were so enthusiastic we just had to. In the second place, our loud-mouthed and radical members were a little too prominent."

Then he informed us that 25 percent of their members were college and university graduates. One of my companions, a miner having his first contact with a high-class union like this, observed that there seemed to be something wrong with our economic system when our B.A.'s and Ph.D.'s had to take jobs as gas-station attendants. This didn't sink in. "A college graduate couldn't want a better job than in one of these fine, big gas stations." Also, the chairman went on, his members were not afraid of losing their jobs, despite a lost and sold-out strike, because they were the best gas and oil salesmen in the city and the companies just could not get along without them!

Thereupon he wrinkled his brow. "Recently," he said, "I read an editorial which impressed me very much. It told of how manners and courtesy had declined in this country since the Civil War, but the gas-station employees had brought back courtesy and good manners so that now we were back where we were before the Civil War."

A few days before we had come upon evidence that in Lincoln's old stamping-ground they were back, at least in some respects, to an even earlier period in human development. In Hillsboro, Illinois, eleven men were held in jail under a total of \$176,000 property bail. A gang of desperadoes undoubtedly? In the opinion of the local authorities, yes. They belonged to the Unemployed Councils. One or two were Communist Party organizers, several were members of the Progressive Miners

of America. They had been demonstrating for more relief, the elimination of snooping by social-service workers, etc. Nokomis followed the example of neighboring Hillsboro and forbade all public meetings. A crowd faced the town commissioners in the town hall and said, "You stay here until you repeal this absurd and unjust ordinance." The commissioners acceded to the demand of the people. That night eleven of their leaders were rounded up by the sheriff and charged with inciting to riot and attempting to overthrow the government by unlawful means.

Sheriff Henry Saathoff made it quite clear to us just who is the government in Lincoln's country nowadays. This making the Nokomis commissioners revoke that ordinance, he explained, got under the skin of the American Legion and the Anti-Horse Thief Association. They did not want radicals or outsiders to hold any more meetings and so "to save trouble" meetings were forbidden and the "trouble makers" were in jail for safekeeping.

As a representative of the American Civil Liberties Union, I suggested to the sheriff it was his business and not that of the American Legion and the Anti-Horse Thief Association to enforce the law in the county and that the Councils should have been protected in their right to assemble and speak. "Yeah," he answered with a weary and somewhat injured air, "you Civil Liberties people always think we're wrong and these agitators are right."

A few days later the two Illinois miners who were my companions on this trip and I had a little experience of our own. We were on our way to try to hold a meeting in Franklin County, scene of fierce miners' battles. We rather expected that we might be run out of that county. But this was Belleville, St. Clair County, with a reputation for being liberal. We looked for no excitement when we stopped for a few minutes to see what was doing on the picket line at the Knapp-Monarch plant. Things were very quiet. A handful of pickets were on hand, but they had little to do. No attempt was being made to run the plant. The management was talking about moving away.

Hank Mayer was sitting in his car half a block down the street; Jimmy Cross was sitting on the curb idly shying pebbles at a tin can. I was talking in a conversational tone with a few pickets, when a couple of policemen who had been lolling in easy chairs on a nearby lawn suddenly displayed signs of life. They asked who we were. They looked at the letters in our pockets and at our automobile licenses. They couldn't see how we could have any "business" there and took us to police headquarters.

Mysterious comings and goings followed for several hours. The result was warrants for our arrest. One warrant charged us with being "vagrants, dissolute, without stated occupation, and common railers and brawlers." Another charged us, under the Illinois criminal-syndicalism statute, with attempt-

ing "to overthrow the government by unlawful means." Justice of the Peace Wangelin set a total of \$24,000 property bail. We were taken to the county jail, denied opportunity to notify counsel or friends. In the evening friends learned by accident that we had been picked up.

At a preliminary hearing a few days later the vagrancy charges were dismissed, but we were bound over to the September session of the grand jury on the other charge. At this hearing the following points about the police and sheriffs were brought out—in testimony under oath. They had not read the Constitution of the United States nor the brief statement of the American Workers' Party's program which furnished the basis for the case against us. They thought the Constitution should be suspended "in time of trouble." What kind of trouble? "Any kind." They did not know the meaning of Bill of Rights. "Do you know who John Hancock was?" Answer, "No." "Do you know who John Adams was?" Answer, "No. Well, there's a John Adams living here in Belleville, if that's who you mean."

We had referred in our testimony to Jefferson and Jackson. The assistant state's attorney declared: "I love Jefferson. I love Jackson. I love McKinley. I love Harding, Coolidge, Hoover." Though a Democrat, he omitted Franklin Roosevelt, explaining to a St. Louis Star-Times reporter a few days later that the justice of the peace before whom the case was being argued was a Republican.

The St. Louis papers, which have a wide circulation in central and southern Illinois, have been campaigning valiantly against the reign of repression and terror. A state senator from Collinsville, James Monroe, has announced that he will fight in the next session of the Illinois legislature for the repeal of the criminal-syndicalism law. Most important of all, a number of locals of the Progressive Miners of America have passed vigorous protests and are taking part in the formation of a united-front committee for the restoration of constitutional rights in Illinois. When the miners' unions are aroused to fight against these fascist tendencies, they can make the reactionary employers and authorities watch their step.

Hank Mayer, Jimmy Cross and I are beginning another speaking tour in Illinois. As we start out, I think of how, many years ago, I landed as an immigrant boy at Castle Garden and an attendant who learned my name was Abraham called me Abraham Lincoln, which led me to find out all I could about Lincoln as soon as opportunity came. And how I discovered that he said the people have "the revolutionary right to dismember or overthrow their government when they grow weary of it." That was in his first inaugural. I'm afraid the anti-horse thieves would make it hot for him if he were to make such an utterance in really troubled times like these.

A. J. MUSTE.

Washington Notes

Mr. Douglas Departs—Who Is the Last Conservative?—Realigning the Election—New Odds on an Old Bet

THE TEXTILE strike and Mr. Donald Richberg's reports on the state of the New Deal appear, at this writing, to divide public attention about equally. While, between them, they do make the most exciting news of the moment, it nevertheless seems to me more worth while to touch upon an incident that by the time these words are printed will have been fairly well relegated to the rear, but which, in the opinion of most thoughtful observers of the Washington scene, is of deeper significance. I refer to the resignation of Mr. Lewis W. Douglas as Budget Director.

Everybody knew that Mr. Douglas was wholly out of step with the administration and had been so almost from the day the New Deal program was revealed. Up to about six months ago, though politically hostile to every aspect of the New Deal, Mr. Douglas had remained personally on good terms with the President. This ceased to be true early last spring, and the amazing thing has been that Douglas' resignation, under the circumstances, should have hung fire so long. For quite a time he had been without influence or importance within the administration. His advice was not only not taken, it was not asked. Ignored and pushed aside, he had had few audiences with the President in the past year.

Why, then, it is fair to inquire, should his final withdrawal be of any real significance? Largely, I think, because through favorable newspaper publicity (he has many warm friends among the "corps of correspondents") Mr. Douglas had been built up into a sort of symbol of conservatism, "the only man left" in the administration with "sound economic views"; the one antidote to the allegedly poisonous concoctions brewed by the professors.

Repeated newspaper statements to this effect, coupled with some public utterances and a vast amount of private conversation upon the part of Mr. Douglas himself, had combined to make his name symbolic of budget balance, reduction of debt, curtailment of expenditures, economy, the gold standard and other fetishes of the reactionary element among both Democrats and Republicans, to which they have been desperately clinging. All of this had made Mr. Douglas something of a national hero to a considerable number of men in both parties. It also had made him an object of active dislike and derision to the administration liberals. The feelings of the latter toward him had been greatly sharpened by the character of Mr. Douglas' personal comments upon administration policies.

Douglas' resignation will do as much as anything else to hasten the realignment of political forces that is the only logical outcome of Roosevelt's policies, bring about the showdown between liberals and conservatives that Secretary Wallace and other of the more sincere and far-sighted administration officials foresee and desire. That is the reason and the only reason why Mr. Douglas' getting out is significant. He himself is unimportant and his going was no surprise.

Personally, I think that Mr. Roosevelt is quite apt within the next few weeks to take some step or make some utterance that will be generally construed as leaning toward the conservative side. (He did so indirectly through Secretary Perkins two days after Douglas' resignation.) It is the sort of thing that the cunning White House Warwick, Colonel Louis McHenry Howe, is apt to advise him to do. An additional reason for thinking so is the fact that the Treasury Department is in a condition bordering upon funk concerning the new financing that has to be done this month, anxious for any word or deed calculated to reassure the banks and minimize the recognized hazards. Whatever Mr. Roosevelt does along this line will, however, be a gesture, intended to baffle the opposition and not really to indicate his true direction. It will be followed as surely as the sun rises by a move in the liberal direction, not so much because Mr. Roosevelt wants to go in that direction as because he cannot help himself. He can slow down, impede and handicap the movement he has started but he cannot check it or alter its course, by either indecision, vacillation or political pussy-footing. The forces engaged in the present struggle are too great to be manipulated and it is becoming clearer all the time that the 1936 campaign will not be made on the old party lines. Whether Mr. Roosevelt yet fully realizes this I do not know, but some of those exceedingly close to him realize it and so do some of his more effective opponents.

We have talked and written in this country for a great many years now about the silliness of the party labels and their evil influence in preventing the natural division between liberals and conservatives. Once or twice abortive efforts have been made to cast them aside, and it is true they have been loosened a little. Never before, however, has such an opportunity as now exists presented itself for ditching the whole meaningless humbug involved in the words Democratic and Republican and getting to a clear-cut, sensible and understanding political basis. It is coming, I think, in 1936 and in spite of the Tammany tactics and hidebound partisanship of the Honorable James A. Farley. Leave it to Mr. Farley and of course the fight will be along the old lines and under the old flags. Fortunately, however, there seem pretty strong indications that it will not be left to Mr. Farley—will not even be left to Mr. Roosevelt—but that both will be swept along by forces far stronger than those they seem—and only seem—to lead.

Incidentally, in connection with the disposition to regard Mr. Douglas as the "last link" between the administration and the conservatives, it is all right so to consider him and I do not want to spoil the effect of his resignation by intimating otherwise. Nevertheless, he is not the last link—there remains one more, even if you count out General Johnson, who is as conservative at heart as his late boss, Mr. B. M. Baruch. The man I mean is Mr. Thomas Jefferson Coolidge, of Boston, named some months ago as Assistant Secretary of the Treasury. Mr. Coolidge is an efficient and popular young man with considerably greater practical knowledge of finance than his distinguished chief, Mr. Morgenthau. Mr. Coolidge is a conservative Democrat, and has made no pretense of being anything else. His views are not very different from those of the departed Douglas and his contempt for the professorial advisers and

Brain Trusters is pretty pronounced. Big bankers speak highly of Mr. Coolidge. He is a plausible and persuasive talker and is extremely well liked personally by both Mr. Morgenthau and the President. However, so far as this administration is concerned, I do not regard Mr. Coolidge as a Treasury fixture. On the contrary, there is already talk of his retirement. His friends say that he came down here not expecting to stay very long and realizing that soon or late a step in financial policy would be taken in which he could not concur. Such a step will mean a return to Boston. He will never dally about it as did Mr. Douglas. The step has not been taken yet, but those in best position to know think it only a question of time. If Mr. Coolidge follows Mr. Douglas, that "showdown" in 1936 will be made even more certain.

In closing, I should like to report that the betting now is that General Johnson will be out of the N.R.A. before Thanksgiving Day—but not before election day.

Washington.

T. R. B.

Other People's Money

*A Sampling of Rumors—Credit to Greenbacks—
Mr. Harriman's Generous Ideas—The
One Salvage in the N.R.A.*

STRANGE, disjointed scraps of rumor come out of Washington and Wall Street. The first story begins thus: it is said a number of high-powered minds in the Treasury Department are working on a plan for a central bank to be proposed to Congress at its next session. This may mean much or little. It may mean merely consolidating all the existing twelve regional Reserve Banks into a single national central bank, controlled by private bankers as at present. Or it may mean the scrapping of the present reserve system and the setting up of a government-owned, government-controlled bank, with far-reaching powers over credit and currency and with supplementary functions of direct government banking capable of indefinite expansion into an actual nationalized banking system. Why this sudden interest in a government central bank?

The second rumor in Wall Street is that for some time the Treasury has been hearing of increasing resistance from great New York banks to further absorption of government bonds. Some insist the resistance has reached the point of downright refusal by banks to take any more such bonds, or at least the determination to curtail such purchases severely.

The third report has to do with Mr. Morgenthau's recent advertisement of the magic formula by which the government has borrowed an additional \$6,000,000,000, while increasing its national debt by only \$525,000,000. The Secretary of the Treasury informed us that there was a profit of \$2,800,000,000 on the gold-devaluation adventure and that the government would use this sum to reduce its debt.

Finally comes the peremptory announcement of the resignation of Mr. Lewis Douglas, the watchdog of the Treasury and the sworn foe of extravagance and inflation.

Knowing persons around Washington put all these scattered facts together and conclude that something is at hand

in the way of a bit of printing. Is the central-bank bill, being drafted with such ostentatious secrecy, a threat to the bankers to force them to retreat from their balking on government bonds? Is the ousting of Mr. Douglas the prelude to a more ambitious program of spending and the issuance of treasury notes against the gold profit?

For some time now the most interesting recreation in our public life has been watching our Democratic and Republican friends and our business leaders groping about for the formula to be used in dealing with the N.R.A. Now Mr. H. I. Harriman, former president of the Chamber of Commerce, who had so much to do with shaping the N.R.A. as we know it and as General Johnson gave it to us, has outlined his plan. He puts it forth in the organ of the Chamber of Commerce and so we may assume that it comes close to the proposal that big business will make at the approaching session of Congress.

First of all, Mr. Harriman suggests that the revised form of N.R.A. will follow pretty generally its present form. The suspension of the Sherman Anti-Trust Act is one of the most sizable gifts ever handed big business by any administration and business does not want to lose it. Mr. Harriman does not propose such a sacrifice. He suggests, therefore, that codes for all service industries be abandoned and that strictly local industries, particularly small ones, be recognized legally and practically, since they are intrastate, as not suitable for code treatment. Codes will be applied to big business only—large-scale manufacturing, mining, the processing industries. Thus they will enjoy freedom from the anti-trust laws, but their smaller local competitors will not.

Next, compulsory codes will no longer be imposed by the President on industries. These large industries will have the right to ask for codes when they wish them and to give up the codes when they become burdensome.

Third, violations of codes will be treated as civil, rather than criminal matters. Violators of codes may be summoned into courts of equity and if found in violation, may be restrained by means of permanent injunctions. Punishment may then be meted out by means of contempt penalties for infractions of the injunctions. This is the proposal to turn the United States courts into compliance boards and regulators of industry, a vicious and fatal practice against which I protested some six or seven years ago when it was attempted under Mr. Coolidge.

Fourth, the labor section, 7a, dealing with collective bargaining will be changed. Here I use Mr. Harriman's own words: "That the labor clause contain a provision permitting labor to bargain collectively through representatives of its own choosing." This is, of course, no concession to labor, as I have insisted all along, since labor has always had this right where it could enforce it by sheer might of organization and that is all it has under this clause. Mr. Harriman admits this.

However, labor will have the right to bargain through representatives of its own choosing "without coercion"—here come the trick words—"from employers or others." Then he proposes to leave out the second part of Section 7a altogether and avoid "any attempt to limit the right of the employee or employer to decide with whom he shall enter into employment relations."

Through the good offices of that stalwart defender of labor, Mr. Donald Richberg, certain persons attempted to put this very thing into the present N.R.A. But some more valiant friends of labor managed to keep it out. Mr. Richberg and his erstwhile pal, General Johnson, tried to nail it down once more by announcing that there were no such words as "closed shop" and "open shop" in the dictionary of the N.R.A. Fortunately the National Labor Relations Board, after more than a year, has now begun to read meaning and force into the labor section. Hence Mr. Harriman now suggests that in the amendment of the act the real teeth in it—if there are teeth—be taken out.

So this is the plan—codes and freedom from the anti-trust laws for big business only, none but voluntary codes and the labor sections completely eviscerated. It would not have been hard to predict that one. There is no part of that act worth saving except the provision for shortening hours and fixing minimum wages, and even the latter is dubious. But the way to obtain these is through a statute—a law passed by Congress and not through codes adopted by employers and their friends in the N.R.A. As to labor, it will get collective bargaining when it is strong enough to exact it and in no other way. JOHN T. FLYNN.

On the Labor Front

The Fur Union's Victory—Aluminum Workers Take the Count—Straws in the Labor Wind

THE STRIKE of 4,000 fur workers in New York City ended last week in one of the outstanding labor victories of the year. Led by the Fur Workers' Industrial Union, the strike effectively stopped production in some 400 shops and apparently convinced the manufacturers that work would not begin again until the workers' demands had been met. An agreement was reached within a week. By its terms the union won complete recognition—forcing the New York Fur Trimming Manufacturers' Association to abrogate its contract with the International Fur Workers' Union, an A.F. of L. organization. Other important concessions included a strict thirty-five-hour week (without the various exceptions stipulated in the N.R.A. code for the fur industry); no differentials in pay between men and women doing the same work (as provided in the N.R.A. code); equal division of work during four slack months of the year; and an unemployment-insurance fund of one and one-half percent of the total weekly payroll, to be paid by the manufacturers but to be administered entirely by a committee of the unemployed. No other union, so far as I am aware, has been able to obtain unemployment benefits of this sort. The settlement also provides that unskilled workers—including shipping clerks and floor boys—must be paid the code minimum of \$16 for a forty-hour week.

This victory of the fur workers is especially significant because their union, affiliated with the Communist Trade Union Unity League, has had to fight not only the manufacturers but also the American Federation of Labor and, indirectly, the N.R.A. The Fur Workers' Industrial Union has been dominant in the fur industry since 1926, but

when its contract expired last January the manufacturers refused to negotiate a new agreement. Instead, their association signed one with the A.F. of L. union—a clear violation of the N.R.A., since the International Fur Workers represented only an insignificant fraction of the fur workers. But despite this fact, neither the N.R.A. nor the National Labor Board took any effective steps to have the contract canceled. Repeated appeals by the Fur Workers' Industrial Union to have the Labor Board hold an election proved unavailing. (At one time the Board did go so far as to promise an election, but it was never held.) The inaction of the N.R.A., either because of its partiality to the A.F. of L., as the fur workers believe, or because of inertia, left the F.W.I.U. no other course than the strike that it has so handsomely won. The present agreement, it is perhaps needless to say, was negotiated without benefit of mediation by government officials. It is an impressive example of what a militant union can do for its members.

In sharp contrast to the settlement won by the fur workers, flimsy and inconclusive is the agreement ending the month-long strike of 10,000 employees of the Aluminum Company of America. They return to work on the basis of what appears to be little more than an understanding arrived at between the company, Mr. Fred Keightly, a conciliator of the Department of Labor, and Mr. Dave Williams, an official of the A.F. of L. The nature of this understanding is perhaps best described by Mr. Williams himself who, the day before it was presented to the workers for their approval, refused to reveal its contents, saying: "You can't say anybody won or lost anything now; there are some issues that have not been ironed out yet and to say what decision has been reached might cause another strike before this is ended." Turning to the settlement itself, one can understand Mr. Williams' note of misgiving. For the issues that he describes as not having been "ironed out yet"—despite a month of striking—include virtually all of the workers' chief demands. The officials of the Aluminum Company not only refused to sign a definite agreement recognizing the union but turned down demands for a standardized wage scale, the closed shop and check-off of union dues. The company's only concession, apparently, appears in its statement that it "recognizes and accepts the principle of collective bargaining" as provided in Section 7a. Obviously, this can mean anything or nothing. The steel and automobile industries—even the Harriman Hosiery Company—have expressed their belief in the principles of collective bargaining.

The company's willingness to have the National Labor Relations Board arbitrate future grievances does not seem especially promising in view of the fact that it has refused such arbitration for any of the issues in the present dispute. This settlement, in short, is what left-wing labor leaders would call a rank betrayal of labor. The aluminum workers have nothing tangible to show for a month of strike activity. In this case we have as vivid an illustration as any of why workers lost faith in A.F. of L. officials and in aid from mediation officials of the government.

In Massachusetts, the cranberry center of the country, 1,500 pickers went on strike last week, demanding an increase in pay from 50 to 75 cents an hour, better work-

ing conditions and recognition of Section 7a. The cranberry pickers, having no union of their own, are members of the Hod Carriers, Building and Construction Helpers' Union. Whether this makes them non-agricultural workers and hence entitled to consideration by the N.R.A., the news reports do not say.

The first threatened strike of newspaper editorial workers was averted last week when The New York Jewish Daily Bulletin agreed to recognize the Newspaper Guild of New York and signed a closed-shop contract with it. The paper will institute immediately a forty-hour, six-day week and on October 15 a forty-hour, five-day week. It will employ only members of the Guild and will stop the practice of using unpaid writers.

In Old Forge Borough, near Scranton, Pennsylvania, the prolonged strike of teachers demanding back pay became militant last week when officials attempted to open the schools with strike-breakers—the officials themselves attempting to conduct classes in that capacity. Some 2,000 men, women and children picketing in sympathy with the striking school teachers made the educational effort futile with their singing and shouting. The Associated Press reports that the state will withdraw its appropriation for the district unless the embattled factions "end the fist fights and hair-pulling that have called out state police and deputy sheriffs to police the borough's streets."

WILLIAM P. MANGOLD.

Texas Lights: VII

CLAMBAKE, DID YOU SAY?

MY COUSIN X went in his time to the University of Virginia. I will not say that he studied hard, but he at least manifested a gentleman's respect for polish and a considerable taste in literature. He became later on the father of a son, L, who in the course of a summer vacation has been visiting certain of his kin nearby and has come in to see me. He would like, he says, to ask me a little something about his studies in English Composition. Under his arm he has brought along the textbook. There is a twinkle in his eye as he says this, but there is also a hint of worryment that his brow shines through only because, perhaps, his brow is young.

As we talk I gather that my little cousin attended last year, and will this, a military school in a neighboring city. L is fourteen and in another year will be graduated to enter any one of the larger universities. I find at length a reason for his perplexity, sarcasm or sense of being thwarted, whatever we choose to call it, by these studies in English Composition; it all proceeds from the fact that a good deal of his education was given him first by his father and then by an old tutor, somewhat in the Colonial manner. (This happened more because their ranch was far away from everywhere than because of any objectionable undemocratic theories on his father's part.) To put it plainly, my little cousin, before entering the military school, had been led through some of the Latin poems, not very far, doubtless, and some of Shakespeare's plays and good English essays

and poetry; there had been no Composition at all. Quite possibly, therefore—and possibly not—he had noticed certain conventional punctuations and forms among good authors. And he may have got the impression that the subject matter of literature consists of things that interest certain authors as aspects of life significant for them or as intensities of their experience. Composition as a laid-out affair with its little subjects, somewhat sterile, set by the professors, had not yet come into L's cosmos. Perhaps another way of summing up his case would be to say that he had already made a faint start toward education. But we cannot stay on that. . . .

The book is in my hand and I see the gray eyes watching me as I note the title and look among its pages. This book, to be studied in order to master an execution of language and literature, is

CORRECT ENGLISH

by

William M. Tanner

Author of "Composition and Rhetoric,"

which, as the Preface soon tells me, it is intended to "precede." Messrs. Ginn and Company are the publishers. The student, it is hoped, will find the volume a complete textbook in grammar, sentence structure, diction, spelling and composition, plus an effort toward a proper balance among a number of these matters. L, however, puts his finger on a special section: "The Composition of Letters." Here I discover that formality, informality and good form, plus self-respect, and courtesy to our correspondents, are immediately explained. There are also the proper arrangements for headings, etc., and proper conclusions—for example, that of a relative or intimate friend is "Affectionately yours, *Frederick*"; an unmarried woman writing to a stranger, "Very truly yours, (*Miss*) *Katherine Sheldon*"; but a married woman writing to a stranger is "Very truly yours, *Eleanor Lawrence* (*Mrs. Vernon W. Lawrence*)"; and a widow who prefers to use her own name, "Very truly yours, (*Mrs.*) *Eleanor Lawrence*." And so L will understand that if Mrs. Lawrence puts "Eleanor," she is a widow preferring to use her own name. Letters of apology and travel letters are illustrated, as well as such a letter of encouragement as says, "Dear Jack: Look here, what do you mean by leaving us in this fashion? . . . You are making a big mistake. . . . You have a good head on you. . . . Great guns, boy! . . ." etc. I read this letter aloud and see the shine in my visitor's eye—formality, informality, good form—yes. Passing other letters by, we come to the Suggested Subjects that one may write upon.

"Look, Cousin Stark," L says, and reads me some of those listed:

My Favorite Pet

An Unusual Birthday Gift

My Dog's Best Trick

Why I Like History

How to Make Walnut Fudge

"Do authors, when they write, act like this?" he asks, in a tone that implies they could not be such fools as to beat up sheer subjects out of the bush.

At this point, luckily, my eye strikes Exercise 273: What

are the principal feeding organs of plants? and Exercise 275, with its directions for giving short talks—since, as the author says, “Many talks, though short, require some previous thinking and planning.” We had better try 359, where a high-school student has written a myth—Lila and Apollo—which happened just before dawn, with Cupid in a mischievous mood, and the beautiful maid Lila, who, as the myth proceeds, loses her footing on the rainbow and falls to the earth, dead, and whose mother hobbles around moaning, “Lila, alack!” which as the people mourn for her they gradually shorten to “Lilac.” I think of this boy, with his feeling for classic story and outline, faced thus with mythological idiocy. Back, back to the letters, then, all the way back to Section 184: Types of Friendly Letters. This one is An Informal Invitation:

Dear Helen,

Hearken! Dad has promised us a clambake and stunts down at Rock Point this week-end. I hereby summon you to be on hand for the great event, for there won't be any party without you. So say we all. Tell your boss that you'll have a nervous breakdown if he doesn't give you Saturday off. Don't be silly and bother about clothes. There'll be only the Crawfords and our family. All you'll need for the trip is a bathing

suit—and car-fare. I'll meet you at the train Friday evening.

Your cousin,
Donald

And Your cousin, Helen, makes An Informal Reply, accepting: “Dear Donald, A clambake, did you say? That's enough. I'll be there . . .” and so on.

I know perfectly well what L is thinking as he watches me read. He has heard the wild young cocktail people talk, and he has known his father and the old tutor; he knows some great literature, and he was early taught to think himself a gentleman. But what sort of people is this stuff set forth in the Composition book intended for? What, then, is he to think?

Poor little fellow—if I knew how to answer without, on the one hand, insulting tradition and civilization for him, or, on the other, confounding his steps among the shining equalities of his country, I should be a wiser man!

Fortunately—“Clambake, did you say?”—he can hardly go on for laughing, and “I'll be there” convulses him anew. The book is ominous and appalling, but it seems better for me to laugh too. “Go on,” I say, “they usually tell you How to Describe an Animal—see if you can find that.”

STARK YOUNG.

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

Housing Under the P. W. A.

SIR: I have neither the time nor the inclination to make replies to all the irresponsible outpourings of letter writers who take good care not to inform themselves as to the actual facts, but I cannot let pass unchallenged the misstatements contained in the communication by Henry S. Churchill which was published in the issue of The New Republic of August 15, last.

It is as far as possible from the fact that the Housing Division of the P.W.A. has been virtually abolished. As a matter of fact, the Housing Division in the comparatively short time since its reorganization has made more real progress than the preceding organization made in months of futile and ineffective effort. The government has no intention of abandoning or slowing up its low-cost housing activities. Quite the contrary.

That the Housing Administration of P.W.A. was notable for futility and delay until it was drastically reorganized, there is not the slightest doubt. I could justly have been charged with abandoning the housing program if I had permitted that organization longer to continue its inept career. The fact is that for a long time I exercised too little and not too much supervision over this organization. I gave Mr. Kohn and his associates an absolutely free hand until I was forced to the conclusion, based upon incontrovertible facts, that they were not getting anywhere. If Mr. Churchill wants to investigate the record here, he is at liberty to do so, but I suspect, from the tone of his communication to you, that he is the type of man who does not want to be embarrassed by facts when he sets out to maintain a cause. I am entirely willing to rest my case with respect to the Kohn administration of the Housing Division on the record.

Washington, D. C.

HAROLD L. ICKES,
Administrator.

SIR: It is something of a temptation to reply to Mr. Ickes in his own amiable way, but I shall resist and stick to the record. P.W.A. press release number 900, dated August 12, 1934, informs an uninterested world that all of the \$150,000,000 for housing has been allotted—\$19,236,600 to “ten limited-dividend companies in eight cities” and \$127,564,000 to the Emergency Housing

Corporation. Of the first amount \$11,471,000 represents signed contracts for seven projects and \$7,765,000 either unsigned or rescinded contracts. Of the seven signed, five show material progress.

All of these represent the accomplishment of the old division, as well as the assemblage of the first land in Atlanta and the basic work for the unrealized but excellent plans for Cleveland, Detroit and Indianapolis, and the arousing of housing sentiment throughout the country.

In the period since Mr. Kohn's resignation the P.W.E.H.C. has proceeded with land assemblage in Atlanta and with some condemnation proceedings in Cleveland. No construction as yet. P.W.E.H.C. is also ostensibly working with the Municipal Housing Authority of New York on land acquisition. It is no secret that the general opinion in New York is that “ostensibly” is the word, and that the real-estate interests have their fingers crossed.

Mr. Ickes says he gave the division a “free hand.” The impression around the country is that they got a free hand and a raw deal—no support either moral or financial. The old division consisted of about twenty-five men to care for the four hundred-odd projects submitted. The new organization has about one hundred men working on fifty-odd schemes. That looks like realization of something by Mr. Ickes and not “virtual abandonment,” it is true, but abandonment can be other than physical. I wish the Secretary had been more descriptive of accomplishment and less spluttery.

Mr. Kohn, of course, needs no defense from me or anyone else against innuendo. There may have been, and probably were, weak spots in his organization. But to speak of “inefficiency” when he was hampered at every turn by refusal of funds for staff and planning, and by the distrust of his procedure, and to speak of “ineptness” when every move his corps made necessitated stumbling over O.G.P.U. flat-feet, is just venting personal spleen.

I reiterate, the division has been “virtually abandoned” because it can't function politico-economically. I repeat that that is no fault of Mr. Ickes', or Mr. Kohn's or Whom Have You. The conflict of private property's legitimate demand for profit with the social requirements of a program to provide a non-profitable necessity cannot be resolved under the P.W.A. set-up. In England such Reds as Lord Balfour, Lord Amulree, Sir Basil Blackett and

Sir Raymond Unwin have recently stated in "A National Housing Policy: Report of the National Committee on Housing" that "the nature and magnitude of the problem" are as follows:

The provision of housing accommodation, not below a minimum standard, for every family in the United Kingdom at a rent within the family capacity to pay should be accepted as a public responsibility and a national service. Fit and proper housing is a national essential, in the absence of which our existing social legislation must prove unfruitful.

P.W.A. is not geared for anything like that. Low-rental housing is impossible under its premises of profit and self-liquidation. It is impossible as an objective by itself, uncoordinated to all the other social problems involved. And if medium-rental housing is the object, then the vested interests have every right to yell like hell at Mr. Ickes' excellent efforts to prevent their making money. Under present premises they are entitled to profits, all they can get, and, if they can't get them (and who can predict what profit a congressional investigation will call legitimate or illegitimate?) they won't play. I don't blame them, but the result, for the Housing Division, is stalemate, virtual abandonment.

New York City.

HENRY S. CHURCHILL.

Against War and Fascism

SIR: The recent violence in California, the spread of Hitlerism in Europe, the huge naval program which President Roosevelt had launched, make it more imperative than ever that the fight against war and fascism in this country should be carried on with greater determination. For the purpose of linking up the forces against California Hitlerism in this country and the constant menace of a war again plunging the world into the abyss of universal violence, the American League Against War and Fascism is calling another Congress which is to meet in Chicago during the last three days of September.

Last year 2,616 delegates attended the Congress, but in the present emergency it is hoped that the number of delegates will be greatly increased. We call upon all professional groups and organizations to support the Congress and to elect delegates so that every element will be represented. War and Fascism are inseparably linked by nationalism gone mad, and it is the duty of everyone, irrespective of race or creed, to combat it.

We appeal to all organizations to elect their delegates at once and to draw up their plans for the Congress. Every organized group is entitled to one delegate, plus an additional delegate for every 250 members. National, state, county and city bodies are entitled to two delegates.

All those interested in the fight against war and fascism here and abroad should address inquiries to the American League Against War and Fascism, 112 East Nineteenth Street, New York City.

ROGER BALDWIN,

DR. HARRY F. WARD,

For the National Bureau of the
American League Against War and Fascism.

New York City.

Anti-Unionism in San Francisco

SIR: In The New Republic of July 25, 1934, under the heading, "The Week," the editors of The New Republic printed such amazing misstatements of facts that we cannot permit them to go uncontested. The article referred to begins "probably no one is watching the development of the San Francisco strike with more interest than a quiet, gray-haired man in San Quentin prison—Tom Mooney. The Industrial Association which refused collective bargaining to the longshoremen, and precipitated the strike, is the same Industrial Association that was formed for the same general purpose shortly before Mooney went to jail."

All statements in this sentence are utterly false. The Industrial Association did not refuse collective bargaining to the longshoremen; did not precipitate the strike; was not formed shortly before Mooney went to jail.

Recognition of the International Longshoremen's Association and agreement to bargain collectively with that organization was granted by the waterfront employers as early as May 28, 1934,

with full consent, knowledge and support of the Industrial Association.

It is absurd, of course, to say that the Industrial Association precipitated the strike. Everyone familiar with the history of the strike knows that the International Longshoremen's Association, after President Roosevelt had signed the National Recovery Act in June, 1933, decided to organize the stevedores on the Pacific Coast and Gulf ports into the International Longshoremen's Association and that the strike was precipitated and called by the I. L. A.

The statement in the article which we are discussing in which the allegation is made that the Industrial Association was formed shortly before Mooney went to jail is false because the Industrial Association was not organized until 1921, whereas Mooney was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to be hanged in February, 1917, four years prior to the organization of the Industrial Association and before such an organization as ours was even contemplated.

The fourth sentence of the article is likewise maliciously false, either because of deliberate intent upon the part of the writer or because of gross ignorance of the subject which he attempted to develop. It states "The Industrial Association stood behind the city government when Mooney was framed and sent to prison on perjured testimony to get him out of the way." As above noted, the Industrial Association was not formed until 1921, four years after Mooney was convicted and sentenced. . . .

ALBERT E. BOYNTON, Managing Director,
Industrial Association of San Francisco.

San Francisco.

[Mr. Boynton's statements are technically correct, but in every other aspect they are wrong and misleading. The San Francisco employers hostile to labor are a continuing body, with a continuing purpose. They express themselves through various organizations, but their common policy does not alter. At the time of the Mooney case they worked through the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce and particularly its "Law and Order Committee." Later on the Industrial Association took up the fight.

Obviously, "the strike" referred to in The New Republic's paragraph was the general strike. This strike was brought about by the refusal of the ship owners to grant to the longshoremen control of the hiring halls, without which collective bargaining became a mockery. The Industrial Association, as everyone knows, stood behind the ship owners in this refusal.—THE EDITORS.]

Extracts from Letters

FRANCES E. HARDEN of Chicago writes to clarify some facts about the National Education Association mentioned by Brent Dow Allinson in "The Teachers Move for Freedom," in our issue of August 1: "Mr. Allinson's statement does not make plain that the N.E.A. is governed by the provisions of the charter granted by Congress in 1906 and also by by-laws adopted from time to time by its own Representative Assembly. The duty of the committee, which the Representative Assembly this year directed the president to appoint, is to secure from Congress an amendment to the charter whereby the Board of Directors shall consist only of such persons as are elected by the states to membership on that board. In other words, the work of democratizing the Board of Directors will not be finished until the committee, to be appointed by the president of the N.E.A., secures from Congress the necessary change in the charter."

"With all due respect to these men of science," writes James Bryson from Montreal in reference to the communication from an international group of scientists in our issue of August 29, "I say catch yourselves on. Pure science is not in any more danger in Germany today than ever it was, nor for that matter in any other country. Science can take care of itself. The newspapers tell us that democracy is dead in the fascist countries. Democracy is not dead, it has been rendered inarticulate. Democracy is mental and cannot be killed. My humble advice to these gentlemen of science, is to go home to their respective countries and agitate for the removal of the fetters from the German people and if they succeed in that they need not worry any more about pure science, and in addition they will be aiding democracy to rise to its feet, and Hitlerism will vanish like a pipe dream."

BOOKS IN REVIEW

The Golden Legend of Li Ning

NO AMERICANS, and indeed no white men of any nation, except a few captive missionaries, have ever visited Soviet China. Nobody can write at first hand about this country that has nearly as many people as the biggest countries in western Europe. But news often gets past the blockade. Official reports of the Soviet government are smuggled out, and sometimes a Soviet official or a general in the Red Army makes his way to Shanghai in disguise and tells his story; or it may be a common soldier, the veteran of six campaigns, who sings a ballad that the peasants have made to celebrate a battle won or a landlord's castle taken. From sources like these, Agnes Smedley has written "China's Red Army Marches,"¹ a running chronicle of hardships and massacres and Soviet victories.

There is a good preface in which Robert Morss Lovett tells what he knows about the author. (Miss Smedley, he says, grew up in a Western mining camp, worked her way to Germany after the War, took part in the Indian revolutionary movement, and first went to China as correspondent for the *Frankfurter Zeitung*. After traveling through the country from north to south, she lived in Shanghai as an assistant to Mme. Sun Yat-sen.) There is also an introduction, written by Miss Smedley herself. It is a clear discussion of Chinese affairs, from the Communist point of view, but it is likely to have a discouraging effect on people who are not much interested in Chinese politics; it may keep them from reading further. If so, they will be missing a story they could find nowhere else. It is the story of how a few thousand men, with a few hundred rifles, fought their way into a Chinese province, rallied the peasants and resisted six campaigns, till at last they were fighting against a modern army of half a million men; yet still they held their ground and still they continued to win over new districts to the Soviets. Incident by incident, I think it is the most exciting story that has been told since the Middle Ages.

This doesn't mean that Miss Smedley has written it in any superlative fashion. There are a good many tricks of narration that she could easily learn if she had leisure for study; and there are other tricks that she seems to have learned from writing Sunday feature stories and ought to abandon. But she has an extraordinary subject here, and she has something else besides—an attitude of reverence toward her subject, a faith that calls to mind the medieval chroniclers and bards. Mind you she is dealing with historical facts. They are obviously simplified, worn smooth by retelling, yet they are facts none the less, such as can be checked by official records. The atmosphere, however, is one of mythical heroism. Reading this book, with its heroes and villains (and no shades of character between them, only the brave Reds and the cowardly Whites), one can't help thinking of Roland against the Paynim, of Richard Lionheart against the Saracens, of the saints and martyrs that crowd the Golden Legend. Did knights ride forth a dragon for to slay? Well, here are men unarmored, peasants clad only in a pair of patched cotton drawers and armed only with a sharpened bamboo lance, yet they crawl forward to capture a machine gun, and die by scores, and capture it. Did Christians sing in the arena? Well, here are little

boys who go out to spy on the Whites, and are betrayed by the pencil stubs in their girdles (only the Red children of the peasant class can read or write), and are stood against a wall to be killed while they shout, "Ten thousand years to the Red Army!"

A group of peasants in a tea house are discussing the Soviet leaders. "I have heard"—it is an old fisherman speaking—"that Chu Teh once went into battle wearing a long robe. The sleeves reached the very earth. When the battle began he walked out to meet the enemy fanning himself with a feather fan—like this. He had no fear of death and the fire from his eyes terrified the enemy so that they turned and ran back to Changsha."—"Chu Teh can do more," another says. "He can summon the wind and command the storm. He takes the stride of ten men and he can lift a horse with one hand. I have heard he can see before and behind him at the same time without turning his head."

A younger peasant, touched with Communism, is skeptical of these marvels, but nevertheless he admits that Chu Teh "has the bravery and endurance of a thousand generals." So it is that new legends gather round a Communist hero.

This book answers two questions that have always been asked about the Chinese Soviets. One is where they get their weapons; the other is how they have managed to resist so many invading armies. The answer to the first question is that the rifles and machine guns of the Chinese Red Army are obtained solely from its enemies. When a new Red regiment is raised, only eight or ten men in each company will have rifles. They will be told to arm themselves at the expense of the first White regiment they meet, even if each rifle costs a human life. Once Chu Teh was told that the Communist stronghold in the mountains was being invaded by five White divisions, who were bringing up their artillery, their horses and camels. He said: "Glory be! Horses and camels! Just what we need."—As for the second question, how the Soviets have managed to hold out year after year, the answer is simply that they have depended on the peasants. In China the peasants have always been oppressed, but until recent years most families owned at least their acre of ground, and on this they could live after a fashion. Things have changed during the present century. The landlords and usurers have grown richer, the peasants have sunk into debt, have mortgaged their lands, have been forced to sell their daughters into slavery. Now they have nothing more to lose. And when the Red troops come marching among them, telling them stories from the other side of the world—about Ma Ka-tsu, the man with a white beard who said that the poor people of the world should unite and break their chains; about Li Ning of Russia, who led his countrymen in a great revolt—then the peasants listen to these golden legends, they rise and kill their overlords, they fight to the death for the Soviets that are giving them land. Always, anywhere, the Red Army can raise new troops; always, anywhere, it can depend on the peasants to ambush the Whites, cut their lines of communication and call to them out of the night mists, "Running dogs of the foreigners and the landlords! Why must poor people fight against poor people? Why don't you join forces with your brothers?" And the White soldiers listen. On one occasion a whole White army of thirty or forty thousand men marched over in a body to join the Reds.

MALCOLM COWLEY.

¹ China's Red Army Marches, by Agnes Smedley. New York: The Vanguard Press. 334 pages. \$2.50.

Why Capitalism Is Declining

The Decline of American Capitalism, by Lewis Corey.
New York: Covici, Friede. 622 pages. \$4.

THE COMMUNIST movement in the United States has in the past few years added numerous recruits from the intellectuals to the workers already in its ranks; but most of them have been poets, novelists, critics and biographers rather than economists and historians. The most serious lack of the movement on the intellectual side has been that of scholars who could interpret the basic economic theories of revolutionary socialism in terms of American experience. Those who were curious concerning the tenets of the party, and wanted something more thorough than could be acquired from popular propaganda, had to go direct to Marx or Lenin, and make their own applications of the approved doctrines to the history of the United States. This is a serious lack in a movement that is concerned with contemporary action rather than merely with doctrinal orthodoxy. It hampers the effectiveness of current controversy and may easily lead to errors of policy.

Lewis Corey has now gone far to supply this want in a long, detailed and carefully documented work which weaves the recent statistical and institutional history of this country into a coherent Marxian pattern. I have no idea whether the book will receive the official *Imprimatur* of the party—Mr. Corey is not, I understand, a member—but, whatever happens in this respect, his work is so scholarly and thorough that it is bound to stand for a long time as one of the most solid American contributions in the broad field of Marxist economics. It is decidedly not a book for popular or superficial reading; the material in itself is difficult enough, and Mr. Corey's somewhat arid style offers none of the vulgarizer's enticements, but it can scarcely be ignored by anyone who pretends to speak with authority on economic subjects, no matter what his own point of view.

The most valuable aspect of the book is that it uses accepted statistics and theories—most of them developed by governmental agencies or non-socialist economists—to illustrate the general principles stated in the abstract by the great socialist intellectuals of the past. Conservative economists have, for instance, become impressed with the critical importance of activity in the industries making capital goods: when these industries are busy, we have a boom, when they are not, we have a depression. Mr. Corey links this observed phenomenon with the Marxist theories of capital accumulation and surplus value.

His analysis avoids most of the vulgar radical errors that can easily be refuted by accepted economic theory. He admits that real wages have risen and can rise whenever the capitalist order is expanding. He sees that profits reinvested in the production of capital goods continue to circulate, and become in turn new purchasing power in the hands of wage earners and others—just as do profits spent by their recipients for consumption goods. He does not imply that depressions are caused initially by an actual decline in the purchasing power of wage earners for consumers' goods. What happens is rather—if, as it appears from a first reading, his analysis is similar to mine—active investment, plus technological advance, enhances the capacity to produce consumers' goods more rapidly than the income devoted to the purchase of those goods; this growing disparity eventually diminishes the demand for new capital goods, as overcapacity in relation to the market appears.

Thus new investment shrinks, depression appears first in the capital-goods industries and spreads from these through unemployment, wage cuts and reduction of orders for materials. He could have made this point clearer if he had referred to Professor J. M. Clark's acute analysis in his "Strategic Factors in Business Cycles," which demonstrates quite clearly how it is that a failure of demand for consumers' goods to *grow rapidly enough* may cause an actual decline in the production of capital equipment to make those goods.

All this, however, has to do with depression theory, not with the alleged basic inability of capitalism to avoid depressions. Must overinvestment and underpayment of the mass of consumers always occur? If so, why have we ever recovered from any depression? How can the situation right itself? An accepted theory is, of course, as Mr. Corey acknowledges, that the balance is recovered by the deflation of capital values, debts and capital costs. New accumulation can then begin from a lower base. But if recovery can start in this way, could not depression have been avoided by an intelligent regulation of wages, profits and investment in the first place, which would have prevented the occurrence of the disparity? Some such task would have to be undertaken by a socialist system, since it would not, presumably, forgo the construction of new capital goods altogether. Part of what the wage earners produced would have to be currently withheld from consumption in order to prepare for production of more goods for future enjoyment. Saving is as necessary under socialism as under capitalism. Mr. Corey's argument on this point is not quite clear to me; at times it sounds as if he were proving that any society that indulges in accumulation must inevitably suffer depression. That would, of course, be proving too much. I believe that depressions are inevitable under capitalism, and are likely to become more severe, but not because there is any theoretical impossibility in adjusting the rates of saving, investment and wages so as to avoid a collapse. Rather it is because capitalists will neither compete under the conditions necessary to self-adjustment under *laissez-faire* nor accept the necessary regulation in so far as competition is absent. Indeed, they are continually, in defense of what they severally conceive to be their own interests, making adjustment more instead of less difficult, by such things as monopolistic price-fixing, stubbornly upheld contractual debts, tariffs, etc.

Nor is it entirely clear from Mr. Corey's argument why capitalism has now reached the stage of decline. He projects his analysis of short-term movements against a background that accounts for the improvement of the workers' condition in the past on the ground that capitalism was, on the whole, expanding, and predicts its worsening in the future on the ground that henceforth capitalism must decline. This thesis seems to assume that all internal resources have now been exploited and that there are no new fields for foreign exploitation that will not lead to imperialistic clashes and war. Such an argument is always answered by conservatives by pointing out, on the one hand, the far from exhausted state of human wants and, on the other, the limitless possibilities of further invention. Technology will discover new ways to satisfy wants, and capital will exploit them. There seems to be no material reason why another burst of accumulation cannot come to pass in this way. A technique for erecting sufficiently cheap and good housing, for instance, would meet an immediate response, for the potential demand is enormous. The real reasons for the decline of capitalism are internal rather than external. It cannot master its internal complexities and rigidities sufficiently to take advantage of the opportunities.

There are hints of the reasons in Mr. Corey's book, but I do not think he develops them with sufficient explicitness.

A different point of view, however, on these basic problems would naturally lead to a different set of tactics of social change. Mr. Corey, like other Communists, sees nothing good in what he calls "bourgeois capitalism"—it is, in his view, a self-defensive but futile mechanism of capitalist interests against their approaching destruction. All attempts to regulate capitalism in the interest of the workers or of stability are, he believes, doomed to failure. Nevertheless, it is possible to admit without fatuous self-deception that the New Deal does involve elements which are sincerely attempting regulation in directions that Mr. Corey's analysis would seem to recommend. Capitalist interests are defending themselves against these attempts, or are negating them by taking over the controlling machinery. The failure of capitalism to submit to the kind of regulation desired by many others, quite as good a proof of its vitality as any that Mr. Corey or those who follow him can offer. They seem to be blind to the fact that the opposition on those very classes whose adherence to the status quo is one of the efforts toward reform that are just as important as any other aspect of declining capitalism as is the class struggle itself.

These criticisms are offered, not by way of depreciating Mr. Corey's book—which contains whole areas of thought not here mentioned at all—but rather as a tribute to a piece of work that deserves the most careful study and discussion. The value of such a tribute lies in its offering something that cannot be accepted or dismissed with a phrase or two, but rather helps to stimulate that clarification of ideas which is the overwhelming necessity of our time.

GEORGE SOULE.

Little Cato

Alexander the Corrector, by Edith Olivier. New York: The Viking Press. 246 pages. \$2.50.

ALEXANDER was a queer enough little stick. Eighteenth-century, Scotch, a stern Calvinist and occasionally mad. Meek as pie but would stand up to anybody. He fell in love with various ladies, one of whom broke his heart by being caught in incest and another of whom he had never seen; he pestered the life out of them and divers other peaceable bodies with unbelievable persistence; and by way of an extension of some of his Scriptural games he compiled in a very short time a very thick concordance of the Bible that is still a standard work. He was such a wizard at nipping typographical errors that he became known as The Corrector, which title seems to have gone to his head, for in between courtships and trips to the madhouse we find him proposing to be knighted (was he not Bookseller to the Queen?) or else let into Parliament, to the end that he might be constituted Corrector of England, whose morals needed trimming. (Bishops were walking publicly on the Sabbath and what not.) But the Queen was dead and he could not bear to tread on the toes of the other gentlemen standing for Commons, and so all that came out of it was that he went from place to place unofficially, taking grave and charming counsel with scandalous people, to mend their ways.

Biographers in the grand manner, or on the satiric side, would have overlaid this brittle story, or made it humorous in a way not funny. Miss Olivier presents her subject with dry understanding, objectively but with loving care; and in the closing chapters she strikes a good round note of feeling. He was not such a crank that when he discovered suffering

he would not move heaven and earth to do away with it, or that when he found a boy condemned to hang he would hesitate to take himself stiffly before Lords and Keepers, and heckle them roundly, and put forth tracts on capital punishment. He never did anything much, he was a great deal under foot, and would have been impossible to live with; but the book works the meager facts concerning him into a well imagined and straightforward story that we will not lay aside without the feeling that we could have better spared a better man.

OTIS FERGUSON.

Foundrymen and Bosses

The Foundry, by Albert Halper. New York: The Viking Press. \$2.50.

MR. HALPER'S first book, "Union Square," was a novel in which the raw material was more significant than the finished product. The grass was rich, but the milk disappointingly thin. In his second novel, "The Foundry," Halper shows an improvement in technique and, more important, a deeper feeling for his subject matter.

It is the story of the men in an electrotype foundry in Chicago during the twelve months that culminated in the stock-market crash of 1929. The author knows his characters at first hand and describes them with jovial realism. His workers are far from the scrubbed and square-faced heroes in blue denim who nobly tightened their belts under the sympathetic gaze of our very best philanthropists during the poster war on the depression. They are given to fornication, their jokes are witless, their talk is earthy and often obscene, but they carry the hallmarks of authenticity from the earnest radical, Heitman, to Pete, the caster, who likes lady barbers. Over the workers are the three partners. Max'l is the real boss, a big, pink-faced man, who cannot find the courage to face the men whom he decides to fire. The unpleasant job of informing the victim is left to his colleagues, Cranly and Duffy, the former a mean-souled nonentity, and the latter a bitter utilitarian, damned to the joyless pleasure of watching his superior writhe in a daily attack of piles.

The novel consists of a series of incidents in the lives of the foundrymen and their employers. Halper is an able story-teller with a sharp eye for the dramatic. Such events as the near death of Max'l at the hands of the wax-caster, the Bowman House Happy Family annual picnic, and the silent murder of Frankie Hunowski have a deft inevitability secured by a fine use of detail. Narrative excellence, however, is not enough to make a book important.

A novel gains significance either by the internal development of the characters and their influence upon the plot, or their relation to forces greater than themselves that give to their destinies dignity and import. And the first of these conditions the book does not fulfill, for the characters fail to develop as it proceeds. They are vividly and sympathetically sketched, but the author does not go beneath the surface. Things happen to them, but from the outside. The crises are of events, not of character. They happen quickly and are quickly forgotten. "The Foundry" in this respect repeats the pattern of "Union Square."

In the newer book, however, the lack of depth in the characters is partially redeemed by a sense of the deeper forces involved in the industrial scene. Against this larger background, the foundrymen and their bosses assume a new importance. Toward the end of the book, as the market begins to cave in, the unreflecting workers envisage a cloud on the horizon of "good, union wages." For the first time, they listen seriously to Heitman, the radical: "The stock

crash is upon us, and Christ knows what'll happen to us. Maybe the four million people out of work will grow to eight million, to twelve million, and then there'll be enough misery for everybody." The final scene shows them going back to the shop at night to work overtime in an emergency. As the dynamos start to hum, one of them picks up a note bearing a final message from Jack Duffy, who has lost both his money and his mistress. It reads: "You will find my carcass in the privy, folks." Which is a good enough curtain for the Coolidge era. RALPH D. RUTENBER, JR.

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Author of

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A Philosophy of Uncertainty

The Horizon of E
York: W. W. Norton

Delisle Burns. New
372 pages. \$3.50.

THE NICE adaptation of idea and fact is rather precarious in a world where the blasphemies of one age become the commonplaces of the next. It is Delisle Burns's argument that eighteenth-century heresy has become twentieth-century gospel, and that the world has sufficiently changed for a new intellectual explanation taking cognizance of two centuries' experience.

Modern commonplaces have their inception with the advent of commercialism and the hurried erection of nation states of doubtful respectability which shifted the nexus of certainty from Rome to a Hebrew document. Though the New Dealers of the twentieth century were interested above all in explaining the terms of these facts they knew, there is a Heavenly City in their concept of the world, a vision of a clock face in conformity with natural laws.

In time commercialism became capitalism. The Heavenly City of the philosophers was transmuted into a haven of rationalization for the nineteenth century. One equipped with the proper scientific hocus-pocus could still every social doubt by reference to a scheme of natural economic laws that revealed the status quo as a divinely bestowed punishment for living in a law-bound world. But the shift in authority from God to Nature was an unfortunate concession, and as science came to be experimental, a respectable way was opened to doubt. Even in the nineteenth century this doctrine of natural necessity was a none too comfortable shoe—and the foot had not stopped growing. By the 1930's the shoe had become unbearable, and a mildly blasphemous world began some sly tinkering with the economic verities. And even though the tinkering resulted only in more appalling evidence of the decrepitude of capitalism, it has created a demand for a brave new philosophy.

This is Delisle Burns's problem in his book on horizons. "In every age the best general formulation that can be made is dependent upon contemporary social life which is hardly affected by the doctrines of the learned of the past." A philosophy, even if in time it could be such a general formulation, cannot give birth to a new age; but it can—even if rarely—act as a midwife. Occasionally, it might be added, philosophy disclaims its son as illegitimate, and when he has come to successful middle age, patches up a retroactive paternity. Most often the dominant philosophy is greatly outmoded, and a society does not formulate its own morality until it is too late for use.

In these pages the effect of our reliance on an eighteenth-century system of thought is vividly set down. Political scientists with a quaint naïveté present "facts" as separate from "values" when the facts represent a selective process based upon value judgments. New political states, based upon such unorthodox norms as fascism and bolshevism, appear; yet political philosophy can only denounce or ignore them. A technological state needs an indigenous type of social control; and traditional thought limits the search to the irrelevancies of the past. Yet Delisle Burns finds encouraging signs of the disruption of the old social morality in such diverse phenomena as the general restlessness that pervades the East and the West, in the note of experimentation in forms of artistic expression and in the conception of relativity and the quantum in the physical sciences.

Of course what Delisle Burns is creating is a relativistic world. He has bright ideas and puts them neatly down; but when they do not come, he takes no chances upon an inactive pen. As a result, the book is heavy, perhaps a trifle dull, and certainly there is too much of it. But if the wisdom of the past is irrelevant, that of the future is still unrevealed and the new world will be so different from the old that prophecy is futile. Accordingly, he presents not a philosophy, but an uncertainty or, more justly, a philosophy of uncertainty. But the book bristles with expectancies. For what is relativity going to do with our ideas of democracy?

IRENE TILL.

Man from the West

Salvation: Poems by H. H. Lewis. Holt, Minnesota: E. G. Hagglund. 39 pages. 25 cents.

East of the Hudson. . . .
Some "proletarian" critics draw the shades
And count who's who—behind the Palisades.

THUS IN the poem, "The Noselings," Lewis attacks us in the East for ignoring Western writers. He is justified. He himself has a strong and original talent that places him among the outstanding proletarian poets of the country. He has a real gift for invective, and a quality to be desired in revolutionary poets who are too prone to dilate on misery: an appetite for battle, for attacking. In New York, and generally in the East, it may seem superfluous to attack agnosticism, but in the Middle West—Lewis is a Missouri farmhand—agnosticism is vocal and an active diverter of revolutionary feeling, and must be attacked. And in "Unholy Roller" Lewis does it:

Here swells a convert who, if born to need
And lammed to work before he learned to read,
Had never known these sacrilegious thrills,
And the "poised breadth of mind" above the "nils."

Whether he writes in rhyme or in free verse his lines have a direct, free-swinging gait. His metaphors are alive, done in terms of action, like the metaphor describing a road-making machine, "You must almost set stakes to see it move." And his language is lively, full of happy inventions and word transformations. His little paper-bound, inexpertly printed book of poems, "Salvation," makes an impressive appearance despite its physical handicaps. No one interested in the remarkable growth of revolutionary poetry should miss it.

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER.

Books in Brief

A History of Modern Culture. Vol. 2: The Enlightenment: 1687-1776, by Preserved Smith. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 710 pages. \$5.

THE SECOND volume of this monumental study reaches the high level of the first. While lacking, perhaps, those poignant insights and flashes that are the more dramatic marks of great scholarship, this history has sanity and balance and discrimination, and it is detailed enough to be more than a mere dancing over the high spots. Although the century here treated was remarkable in science chiefly for the earlier Baroque figures of Newton and Leibnitz, perhaps the most satisfactory chapters are those on science and scholarship, including the development of schools and universities. (One notes, however, the curi-

ous omission of Spallanzani, whose work formed a bridge between Leeuwenhoek and the nineteenth-century bacteriologists.) The chapters on the arts are the most meager and the least detailed in the book: a defect all the more accentuated because of the lack of illustrations. Indeed, a forty-eight-page supplement of illustrations, though it would increase the price of these books, would appreciably augment their value. Otherwise, this is an admirable work, and cannot be too earnestly recommended to every serious student of modern civilization.

L. M.

Lightship, by Archie Binns. New York: Reynal and Hitchcock. \$2.50.

Into the life histories of his crew, moored throughout the story to the day-in-day-out life of a lightship stationed off the Northern coast, Mr. Binns has put much feeling and fine writing. Several of the chapters could be chopped out and strong complete stories made of them: the first love of Clark, whose Columbia River did not lead to the sea; the story of Harry, who pressed pants and was uneasy about his wife until they shanghaied him; the thumping tale of Mickey O'Rorke, the little giant of the black gang; and so on. When there are no stories, there is the life on Lightship 167, which opens in the rolling dark of

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a midwatch and goes on from day to day, with the crew discussing their chances of relief, their time ashore, their reasons for finding this a peaceful if not snug harbor; and the background of a strange separate country is built up with convincing atmosphere and bits of action. But life as really lived by these men was back in the past; they seem to be here mostly to reflect on it. And in spite of the fight for safety at the end, the reflections are too general and simple to make the novel do anything or be anything by itself. Outside of the stories it tells, it is like the pictures in stereopticon frames: tridimensional and real, but fixed, all over at the time they began. P. C.

Sweet Land, by Lewis Gannett. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. 237 pages. \$2.

Lewis Gannett took his family and his Ford, and went to look at America. In the course of about a month he drove from New York to Los Angeles, up into the Pacific Northwest, and back to New York. His book is a casual, friendly account of the journey, full of helpful hints about automobile touring, conversations with assorted Americans, notes on cities and facts about fauna and flora, which last reveal Gannett's almost professional training as a naturalist. Obviously, many things are omitted from such a book, among them practically everything that a reporter for *The Daily Worker* would find in making a similar trip; this was a middle-class journey through middle-class America, which is the only one the average tourist ever sees. The book's limitations, however, are deliberate, not accidental, and do not detract from its usefulness within the framework of the author's ambitions. It will probably inspire

many similar excursions by Easterners who are now more familiar with Cannes than La Jolla; and that is no doubt a good thing. Among these travelers will presently be found Lewis Gannett and family, going slower than they did this time, stopping oftener, exploring more side roads and, I trust, coming to know the West with which they have thus far had only a vacation love-affair. B. B.

Contributors

MARY HEATON VORSE, author of "Growing Up," "Men and Steel" and "Strike," is now observing the textile strike in New England.

HAMILTON BASSO, a native of New Orleans who now lives in Aiken, South Carolina, is the author of a biography of General Beauregard and of two novels, "Relics and Angels" and "Cinnamon Seed." He is now at work upon a third.

JOSEPH P. LASH, editor of *The Student Outlook*, recently attended the congress of the Socialist Student International at Liège as delegate of the League for Industrial Democracy.

A. J. MUSTE is chairman of the American Workers' Party. RALPH D. RUTENBER, JR., senior master of the Wooster School, contributed to the recent New Republic symposium, "The Students Speak Out!"

ISIDOR SCHNEIDER, who received a Guggenheim fellowship for 1934-35, is completing a novel.

IRENE TILL is on the staff of the National Board of the Y. W. C. A.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of Lewis Mumford, Peter Cusp and Bruce Bliven.

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